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## PATRONAGE.

THE hope of rising in the world by patronage is one that prevailed more in the days of our ancestors than in our own. The novelists, essayists, and other writers on manners, of the last century, are full of allusions to this means of obtaining fortune; and, in our recollections of their writings, few scenes are more vividly impressed on our memories, than the antechambers of great men, where expectants of posts and honours would wait for months upon the encouragement of a look, or a squeeze of the hand, and yet be disappointed at last. Though, happily, this delusion is now less prevalent than it was, we still occasionally see something of it, and, almost invariably, where it has been entertained by any individual, find occasion to regret that he should have trusted to so weak a reed.

Patronage generally implies a favour or aid conferred by one individual upon another, for some ill-defined, and generally very slight consideration. Where it is a direct interchange of one favour for another fully equivalent, it is not patronage. Upon the whole, it may be held to signify a hope of getting something valuable from a fellow-creature, without any thing being given in return, either before or after. Now, it is surely unnecessary to point out, that, if such be its character, it is entirely destitute of a proper ground in philosophy. No truth can be more obvious, than that it is little at the best which the denizens of this world can do for each other. Every one is bent, more or less, on his own gains and gratifications, and, though much is *occasionally* done for others, there is no depending upon any such benevolence as a *principle*. Hence he who places his sole trust in patronage, perils, upon an uncertain and capricious feature of human nature, that which should never for a moment cease to rest on the most solid foundation. He sits upon the shore, wasting his time and energies in wooing of the wind, when, if he had been all the time plying the oar, he might have already accomplished the voyage. He has, in the first place, no right to hope that any other man will do for him that which the most of other men have to do for themselves. He, in the second place, forfeits his independence, and almost his honour, in consenting to profit by an abject solicitation of favour from a fellow-creature. But the grand point is, that he spends that time upon a hazard which should only be spent on a certainty. Time is one of those things about which there should be no dallying. A man may stake money, and, if lost, it may be replaced; but if he stakes his time, and loses, the loss is irreparable, and the damage fatal. In so busy a world as this, to omit exertion, even for a year, when exertion is making by others of the same age, is apt to be highly detrimental; it may put one behind in the race, and prove so discouraging, that the belated entrant upon life may fall still farther behind, instead of straining to make up his deficiency.

Again, there is no certain reliance to be placed on another. We may trust trifles to the conscientiousness of our fellow-creatures, but not our whole prospects in the world. No other person can feel the pressure of our interest as we do ourselves. If he neglects any thing, he will neglect that; and when we see so many men neglect their own concerns, how can we hope that they will be careful of ours? Besides, we are apt to be very much mistaken about the intentions of a supposed patron. He drops a casual word, perhaps, or an approving smile, and we instantly mark our sixth son as a person for whom he is *to do*; whereas he hardly meant any thing, or, if he did mean something, forgot it immediately after. I have heard of a great man receiving a visit from an old acquaintance

of humble rank, who, to his infinite consternation, introduced a strange-looking raw boy to him, as the baby he had admired so much in the cradle a few years before, and a hope was at the same time insinuated, that it would be in his power to get the young man *put forward*, as he had been educated on purpose. It scarcely ever happens that a supposed patron gives a written promise; it is always some oral expression, more or less vague and insincere—for it is seldom that the promises of the mouth pretend to the same solemnity as those of the pen. The patron is above being precise in his words; the patronised must not be so uncourteous as to question him too closely. He therefore goes on for years, accommodating his education, his thoughts, his feelings, and the whole of his proceedings, to the nature of what he expects—wastes time, during which he might have been far forward in another and more independent career—and, after all, discovers that there is a ruinous difference between the intentions of his patron and his own hopes—has to wait, and linger, and pine, and perhaps be placed at last much below his aims, or disappointed entirely. The misery, however, of an expectant, has been fully described in language which precludes the necessity of any longer dwelling on this part of the subject:—

Full little knowest thou, that hast not tried,  
What hell it is in suing long to bide,  
To lose good days, that might be better spent,  
To waste long nights in pensive discontent;  
To speed to-day, to be put back to-morrow,  
To feed in hope, to pine with fear and sorrow;  
To have thy princess' grace, yet wait many years,  
To have thy asking, yet wait many years;  
To fret thy soul with crosses and with care,  
To eat thy heart through comfortless despair;  
To fawn, to crouch, to wait, to ride, to run,  
To spend, to give, to want, to be undone.

SPENSER'S *Mother Hubbard's Tale*.

There is another mischief in patronage—it tends to render equivocal the real merit of any one who has relied upon it. If a young writer, for instance, is in the least degree really or apparently patronised by an old one, he is sure to be a sufferer by it. The world suppose him to be altogether indebted for any little excellence there may be in his works, and any little notice they may gain, to his seniors, while he feels but too painfully within his own bosom that his elders do nothing for him whatever, but, on the contrary, too often try to keep him in the background. Knowing the difficulties that lie before him, he is apt to attach himself as a kind of vassal to some man of established reputation, in the vain hope of being thereby drawn into notice. The result is, that, while the worshipful senior is either unable or unwilling to obtain public notice for his protégé, that part of the public who know any thing of the matter, attribute to the former all of good that the junior puts forth, and the latter finds in the end that he has only protracted the day of his own fame. I would advise young men who aspire to literary honours, to be acquainted with as few of the elders of the tribe as possible, but, above all things, to show no undue deference to them. I have known cases where these elders were very attentive to youths who had no chance of ever rivaling them, and who paid them a sufficiently mean homage, but very rarely have observed one of them affording real aid to such as were able to do without it. A young man of talent, and of independent feelings, will find it his best course to appeal directly to the public, and look there, and there only, for his reward. It is but poor game at the best, to be always trying, by personal means, to obtain that notice from individuals, which the public have as yet denied, however high those individuals may be in literature. Unless a decided impression has been made upon the mass of society, nothing has been gained; but when that great

end has been achieved—and it will only be achieved by his own express exertions—the young writer may laugh at the unsought kindness with which his elders will then treat him, and perhaps solace himself by looking down upon those who formerly would not have cared though he had never been able to rise to their level.

## A FEW DAYS IN IRELAND.

### FIFTH ARTICLE.

OUR next move was, by Clonmel, to a spot in the neighbourhood of Clogheen, where we took up our residence for two days. During this time we paid a visit to a natural curiosity which has excited great interest in Ireland—the Kingston Cave, situated at a point in the midst of the towns of Cahir, Mitchelston, and Clogheen (which lie within a few miles of each other), and at no great distance from the village of Ballyporeen, so celebrated in song for a certain festive wedding. Having driven for some way through a low and tolerably well-cultivated piece of territory, we arrived early in the forenoon at the humble farmhouse of Coolegarranro, tenanted by Roger Gorman, the individual who discovered the cave, and now shows it to strangers. The residence of this person bore an exact resemblance to the farm-houses of the last age in Scotland, consisting of two apartments, in one of which, around a fire on the hearth, the family usually resides; while the other is a kind of sacred chamber, not usually occupied, but yet provided with only an earthen floor, and some very ordinary furniture. Gorman—a tall dark-complexioned Irish peasant in middle life—was soon ready to conduct us to his cave, which we found to open in a quarry in the side of a low eminence, about a hundred yards from the house. It was in quarrying here, in May 1833, that Gorman discovered the cave, which might have otherwise remained shut up for ever. It simply consists in a labyrinthine series of passages and halls, pervading the interior of the low eminence alluded to, to the extent of nearly half a mile in some directions, and descending two or three hundred feet beneath the surface. The rock is a limestone.

Having made such changes of attire as befitted the task before us, we descended through a very narrow, steep, and somewhat dangerous passage, partly by the aid of a ladder, and partly by slight projections in the face of the precipice, till we reached a passage comparatively level, probably sixty feet below the opening. Gorman and a train of men and boys, each bearing a candle, accompanied us in the capacity of guides, and their directions for the placing of our feet were almost every moment necessary. Two days' labour of two men might go a great way in making the descent more easy and less dangerous; but it is probable that the numerous persons of respectability, and of both sexes, who visit the cave, will be allowed for many years to struggle their way down, to the risk of their necks and the soiling of their clothes, ere these two days' labour be bestowed. Pursuing the level passage alluded to, we soon came to a spacious hall termed the House of Commons, and speedily thereafter to a second, termed the House of Lords—for every remarkable part of this *southern* has already received a name. The height of these openings must be fully thirty feet. By the aid of the candles, we now perceived various specimens of the spars and stalactites for which the Kingston Cave is famous. These are produced by the lime-charged water which descends from the rock above. In some places, vast concretions, or icicles, as they may be termed, depend from the ceiling, corresponding to hillocks rising from the floor, the water

constantly dropping from the lower extremities of the former class of objects upon the tops of the other. In several instances, the icicle and the hillock have at last met mid-way, and gradually become transformed into a massive pillar. We saw a pillar about twenty feet in length, slender and elegant: it is called the Fifty-pound Pillar, because, according to the guides, that sum was in vain offered for it. Another is thirty-five feet in circumference. In one of the larger halls, a rock upon the floor has, by a dropping from above, been hung all round with a range of icicles, which diminish progressively in size, like the pipes of an organ. A boy, passing a stone rapidly along these pipes, produced a scale of musical notes very much like the effect of a finger drawn rapidly along the keys of a piano-forte. The colour of the stalactites is a dusky white; but there are also many incrustations of spar, which sparkle brilliantly under the light of a candle, and produce an effect such as early prepossessions would lead us to expect only in a fairy palace. One long narrow hall, called the Cathedral, from its resemblance to a large Gothic church, when lighted up by a range of candles at regular distances, was so dazzling as almost to overpower the sight. Nor was the simple icicle the only form of these incrustations. The fluent matter has in many places taken the form of curtains, to which there is a perpetual increase of breadth, without any increase of thickness, so that at last the passage was in one instance altogether stopped up by it. It is a favourite feat of the boy guides to scramble up to places where they can surprise the stranger by showing their light gleaming dimly through one of these sweeping robes of nature's workmanship. And what is most interesting in the curtain-shaped stalactites, is the perfect naturalness of the folds or undulations in which they hang. Though so hard that the boys beat them with stones, and make them sound like drums, no more or damask curtain could be arranged in a manner more easy or graceful. Sometimes there are many folds very near each other, so as to look like the leaves of a half-open book. Our wanderings and scramblings through this crystalline wilderness were enlivened by a characteristic scene. Having expressed a sense of fatigue, we were told that, if we would wait a little, one of the guides—a flap-lipped, open-mouthed, good-humoured fellow, of the name of Paddy—would regale us with a song, having a notable gift that way. We gladly assented, and presently, while all stood round, candle in hand, the Braham of Coolegarranro commenced a vociferous ditty, of which we could not distinguish a single word, except a frequently recurring something about "a pretty fair maid." The scene, however, considering the singularity of the situation, the strange mixture of persons in the company, and—shall we say it?—the self-consciously ridiculous figure which ourself cut in a ragged flannel jacket, borrowed from a labourer, a pair of overalls, and a nightcap—was extremely amusing; more especially when, at the end of every unintelligible stanza, the complainant Gorman whooped out "Success!" in a voice fit to endanger even that adamant ceiling. Singing seems to be an established entertainment in the Kingston Cave. The party of visitors almost immediately preceding ours, had communicated, in the album at Gorman's house, the important information, that, having descended into the cave, Miss Kate O'Gallagher had obliged the company with the Meeting of the Waters, executed in her usual admired style. To explore all the recesses of the cave takes about six hours. We contented ourselves with what we could see in three, and then gladly ascended to the open air.

Continuing our drive to Mitchelston, we soon reached that village, which is said to be a thriving one, but presents no object of interest except a splendid modern seat belonging to the Earl of Kingston. We made no attempt to see this, nor scarcely any other fine house in Ireland, for we can imagine no greater folly than to spend, upon shows which are the same in every civilised country, time that might be employed to so much greater advantage in becoming acquainted with what is peculiar and characteristic. In the course of a stroll through the village, we witnessed a funeral in humble life, being, however, neither the first nor the second exhibition of the kind which had met our eyes. The funeral of an individual of the lower orders in Ireland is different in many particulars from a similar affair in Scotland. Instead of the substantial suits of black, which the lowliest Scotmen invariably wear on such occasions, the Irish come in their ordinary, or at most their Sunday, coloured clothes—either walking or riding. The women also attend, walking in groups, with their blue cloaks and white linen caps, and generally whining and lamenting, though only for ceremony. Among the mourners at Mitchelston, there were many men in a state of intoxication. On arriving at the burial-ground, which was connected with a large Catholic chapel, the coffin was carried round the place of worship, apparently in obedience to a religious custom, and then set down at the place where it was to be interred, while some of the men got spades, and began to dig a grave. The women, at the same time, knelt down upon one of the little mounds which overspread the place, and became absorbed in grief or devotion. Learning that the whole ceremony would occupy more time than we had to spare, we left the churchyard without witnessing its conclusion.

We had hitherto taken every opportunity of inspect-

ing the interior of the cabins, and inquiring into the domestic condition, of the inmates. A passing shower afforded us an excuse for stepping into a particularly wretched hut in the outskirts of Mitchelston, and asking a few minutes' shelter. The professed object of our request was scarcely to be here obtained, for the rain entered at several parts of the roof, and it was with difficulty that we obtained a dry place whereon to sit down. This cottage might be twelve feet square—a slight and low fabric of mud, with a supposed roof of thatch: a small fire-place, a miserable bed-frame, a stool or two, and a cooking utensil, formed the furniture. We found it to be occupied by a poor woman, past the middle of life, whose husband, a labourer, had died only ten days before. Her sole dependence, besides her own slender and precarious endeavours, was upon a married daughter, who was obliged to aid in the support of her own family by field-work. The case would be one of striking misery, if it were uncommon. But the condition of this poor woman is not worse than that of hundreds of thousands in Ireland. The Report of the Commissioners on the State of the Poor in Ireland, describes the condition of the aged and infirm among the peasantry as extremely wretched. From the effects of scanty food and clothing, cottiers and small holders of land generally decline at about forty years of age, and at fifty-five completely break down. There was once a custom of supporting aged relatives with cheerful tenderness; but the narrow circumstances of the young now render it extremely difficult for them to maintain this humane usage, and it is rapidly becoming rare. According to one witness before the Commissioners, labourers supporting their parents are often reduced to one meal of dry potatoes in the day: it comes sometimes to counting the potatoes. The son-in-law or daughter-in-law, as it happens, begins to grudge the modicum requisite for the old people, since it so obviously diminishes what is required for the young. "Being always at home," says one witness, "the daughter-in-law is apt to find her husband's father in the way, and you will see the old man cowering in a corner of the chimney, as if he was endeavouring to hide himself from her. Domestic quarrels arise; the old people's lives are embittered, and they are at length driven out to beg." The turning out of the old people is now indeed so common, that the contrary is the exception; so that this virtue of the lower orders of Irish may be said to have become extinct. In a nation, which, if it have any virtue at all, possesses that of warm affections, how extreme must be the misery which produces such a result!

The nature and extent of the misery endured in Ireland, are but imperfectly known in the sister kingdoms. Volumes have been published on the subject; but such books are read only by a few: the bulk of the English and Scottish nations have at this moment scarcely the most dim idea of the sufferings of the Irish. Nor could they form any description an adequate notion of the state of the lower millions in Ireland. To be fully comprehended, it would require to be seen. When the present writer became personally witness to the misery of the country, his impression was, that, so far from being exaggerated by previous writers, it had not been represented in strong enough colours. These gentlemen appeared to have thought it necessary to under-do the picture, in order that it might obtain credit for truth.

To convey a correct idea of the miserable condition of the bulk of the Irish people (always excluding the north-eastern counties), it would be necessary to give, in the first place, an account of the mean style in which the farmers live, leasing, as they in general do, small pieces of land, at rents not designed to be fully paid, but to give the landlord a power to exact as much of the produce of the soil as they please, only enough being in general left to allow the farmer to feed upon potatoes. Next, it would be necessary to describe the larger and lower class of labourers, who are also farmers in their way, being in general the tenants of mud cabins, to which an acre or less of ground is attached, for which they pay a rent of about two pounds, mostly taken up in work, or else paid by the feeding of a pig; the only broad feature of difference between farmer and labourer being the comparative amount of potatoes on which they respectively live. The incomes of these poor people—the millions of Irish population—allow scarcely any thing for clothing or comfort of any kind. Their utmost hopes are limited to a sufficiency of mean food, of one kind, to sustain life. These poor people marry early, because they do not see how they can be worse than they are. The want of all hope and ambition, into which the circumstances of the country plunge them, operates in these imprudent alliances, in exactly the same manner as it operates in keeping them dirty and ragged. A certain animus is necessary both to stimulate to cleanliness and to maintain self-denial; and this is wanting in Ireland. The consequence is the rise of large broods of naked under-fed children, who in many cases oblige their parents to become beggars, or at least become beggars in their behalf. A respectable woman of the middle orders at Cashel informed us, that she had known numerous instances of families which had entered the world with better prospects, being at last "driven to the road" by the number of their children, and the impossibility of otherwise supporting them. Mendicancy is a resource which all classes in Ireland, beneath and including the farmers, have ever present before their eyes. This is a cause

of its being very much encouraged. No one knows how soon it may be his own lot to go abroad a beggar; and he therefore, by an anticipatory sympathy with his own case, gives to beggars as liberally as he can. The labourers have a greater chance of becoming beggars than the farmers; and it is remarked, that, though poorer than the farmers, they are more beneficent. Nowhere are mendicants treated with more respect than in Ireland: it is just the non-mendicant respecting themselves, or what themselves will soon be.

In the Report of the Commissioners, above referred to, we have several most touching pictures of poor families of the labouring class, drawn by themselves. At Ennis, in the county of Mayo, an able-bodied labourer, named Hugh O'Malley, whom Mr Lyons, an official party, attests to be "an honest fellow, well known and befriended by his neighbours," gave the following account of himself:—"I have a wife and four children. I hold three-quarters of an acre of land, for which I pay one pound, taken out in labour. This generally gives me and my family potatoes for five or six months of the year. I get an occasional day's labour. I have often taken 3d. a-day rather than sit idle. My wife may earn 1d. on a day she is employed to spin; but if she is employed one day, she may not be employed again for a month. She has been sickly for the last seven years." [Mr Lyons says her complaint is one of those that are common here, arising from the nature of the food used by the poor, which is such, that if a person used to wholesome diet were reduced to subsist on it, he would not be alive in a month.] "During the past summer I had not enough, nor any thing like enough, of potatoes for myself and my family. It will be worse next summer. My potato crop has failed this year. The cause was that I had no proper seed. My crop used to last till May—now I am bare in November. I have got a month's stock of potatoes. When these are gone, as I expect no employment, I do not know how we are to live afterwards, but go upon God. . . . My family never begged but twice, once for three weeks, and again for a month; but I will not be able to keep them from it this winter. . . . I have not worn shoes for ten years. I have had no stockings but such as you see; the legs of stockings a neighbour gave me when he had worn out the feet of them. I have not got a new coat this five years. This is an old one a neighbour gave me six months ago; you see it is nothing but rags. There is a son of mine (putting forward a half-naked boy about eleven or twelve years old); he never wore breeches, he never had one; this is a borrowed coat he has on him (a man's coat all rags, dangling and trailing about him). You see he has nothing else covering him but his shirt. That shirt is the only stitch of clothing he has of his own. . . . We lie on straw that we get from some neighbour in charity; we do not change it; we do not part with it at all; but as it wastes away, the neighbours give us a wisp to add to it. All the bed-clothes we have is the single fold of a blanket and a sheet. My wife and I use the blanket; the children all lie together, and have no covering but the sheet. There are numbers in the parish as badly or worse off than I am."

If such be the condition of families in which the husband and father is spared, what must be the state of those from which he has been taken away. The Report of the Commissioners abundantly evidences given by widows respecting their own condition, and nothing could be more heart-rending. When sickness comes on, the misery of a poor family reaches its height. Out of many pictures on this subject, take the following from a surgeon in the county of Galway:—"I have known in one family, the mother, the three daughters (one of them married, pregnant), and the son, to be all lying ill of fever at the same time. Their only attendant was the father, an old man, eighty years of age, who sat up watching them night after night. The only bed that was raised from the ground was given to the son, who was looked to as the future support of the family. The mother and daughters lay, two and two, on straw spread on the damp floor of the cabin, one beside the fire, the other beside the door, which was not nearly large enough to fill the entrance, and was of course almost useless for excluding the air. Outside the door stood the stagnant pool, sending forth the most unwholesome exhalations; there was no one to remove it. They were unable to procure the nourishment proper for their condition. In fact, they were destitute of any food but that with which their poor neighbours supplied them, potatoes, and occasionally milk, which they left at the door, being afraid to enter the cabin. Of course, the old man could render no efficient assistance. I found him one day kneeling towards the bed, crying over one of his daughters that was dying, while another was crawling along the floor to reach some relief to the third, who was lying with her in the same bed. Four died altogether out of this family; two before I saw them, and two afterwards. This is one case only out of many that I could mention equally deplorable."

If there be any to whom statistical facts will be more convincing than such pictures of individual cases, they may be satisfied with what is stated of a single parish by Mr Lyons:—"According to a census I made two years ago, there were then in this parish 751 men who had no shoes, and were unable to procure them; out of a population of 9000, there were 3136 persons, male and female, who within five years had not purchased any important article of clothing, as a gown, a coat, &c. As to night covering, of 1618



families, the entire population, 1911 have only one blanket each, such as it is; 299 families have no blanket at all." We ourselves visited many cabins, in which there was no appearance of a bed, except a small heap of much-worn straw in the corner of the single apartment, covered with a bit of rug.

For a state of things so lamentable, many remedies have been proposed. The existence of five millions of acres of waste but improvable land has been pointed to, as if that ground held out a prospect of support to the existing poor. Employment, according to Mr Inglis, is all that is required to put Ireland to rights. Education is the panacea of another set of state physicians; and a poor-law has recently been advocated as one thing eminently necessary. We believe that education, a poor-law, and employment (if it could be procured), would be highly useful to Ireland; but, for a thorough reversal of the doom which has hung upon it for centuries, we can only look to an abrogation of the circumstances out of which that doom arose. Diversity of race and of faith, throwing a gulf of antipathy between the higher and the lower ranks in Ireland, and keeping alive, far into an enlightened age, habits and passions which have elsewhere been long abolished or quelled, is the real curse of Ireland. Till sympathy take the place of antipathy, and the various orders of the people unite as they do in other countries in advancing the general interests without regard to differences in speculative opinion, Ireland cannot be a peaceful, and, consequently, not a prosperous country.

### THE THIMBLE CONJUROR OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

[From "Colonel Crockett's Exploits and Adventures in Texas," a book which we have just received from America. In this is genuine backwood, and the matter exceedingly characteristic of the unsettled state of society in the southern parts of the United States. The Colonel is his own historian down to April, in the present year, when this famous specimen of backwood rusticity and strength of character was killed by the Mexicans, in a fort which he had defended to the last extremity.]

THERE was a considerable number of passengers on board the Mississippi steamer, and our assortment was like the Yankee merchant's cargo of notions, pretty particularly miscellaneous, I tell you. I moved through the crowd from stem to stern, to see if I could discover any face that was not altogether strange to me; but after a general survey, I concluded that I had never seen one of them before. There were merchants, and emigrants, and gamblers, but none who seemed to have embarked in the particular business that for the time being occupied my mind—I could find none who were going to Texas. All seemed to have their hands full enough of their own affairs, without meddling with the cause of freedom. The greater share of glory will be mine, thought I; so go ahead, Crockett.

I saw a small cluster of passengers at one end of the boat, and hearing an occasional burst of laughter, thinks I, there's some sport started in that quarter; and having nothing better to do, I'll go in for my share of it. Accordingly, I drew nigh to the cluster, and seated on a chest was a tall lank sea-serpent looking blackleg, who had crawled over from Natchez, and was amusing the passengers with his skill at thimble-rig; at the same time he was picking up their shillings just about as expeditiously as a hungry goblin would a pint of corn. He was doing what might be called an average business in a small way, and lost no time in gathering up the fragments. I watched the whole process for some time, and found that he had adopted the example set by the old tempter himself, to get the weather-gage of us poor weak mortals. He made it a point to let his victims win always the first stake, that they might be tempted to go ahead; and then, when they least suspected it, he would come down upon them like a hurricane in a cornfield, sweeping all before it.

I stood looking on, seeing him pick up the feed from the green horns, and thought the men were fools to be cheated out of their hard earnings by a fellow who had just brains enough to pass a pea from one thimble to another, with such sleight of hand that you could not tell under which he had deposited it. The thimble conjuror saw me looking on, and eyeing me as if he thought I would be a good subject, said carelessly, "Come, stranger, won't you take a chance?" The whole time passing the pea from one thimble to the other, by way of throwing out a bait for the gudgeons to bite at. "I never gamble, stranger," says I; "principled against it; think it a slippery way of getting through the world at best." "Them are my sentiments to a notch," says he; "but this is not gambling by no means—a little innocent pastime, nothing more. Better take a hack by way of trying your luck at guessing." All this time he continued working with his thimbles; first putting the pea under one, which was plain to be seen, and then uncovering it, would show that the pea was there; he would then put it under the second thimble, and do the same, and then under the third; all of which he did to show how easy it would be to guess where the pea was deposited, if one would only keep a sharp look-out.

"Come, stranger," says he to me again, "you had better take a chance. Stake a trifle, I don't care how small, just for the fun of the thing." "I am principled against betting money," says I, "but I don't mind going in for drinks for the present company, for I'm as dry as one of little Isaac Hill's regular set speeches." "I admire your principles," says he; "and to show that I play with these here thimbles just for

the sake of pastime, I will take that bet, though I'm a whole hog temperance man. Just say when, stranger."

He continued all the time shipping the pea from one thimble to another; my eye was as keen as a lizard's, and when he stopped, I cried out, "Now; the pea is under the middle thimble." He was going to raise it, to show that it wasn't there; when I interfered, and said, "Stop, if you please," and raised it myself, and sure enough the pea was there; but it might have been otherwise if he had had the uncovering of it. "Sure enough you've won the bet," says he. "You've a sharp eye, but I don't care if I give you another chance. Let us go fifty cents this bout; I'm sure you'll win." "Then you're a fool to bet, stranger," says I; "and since that is the case, it would be little better than picking your pocket to bet with you; so I'll let it alone." "I don't mind running the risk," said he. "But I do," says I; "and since I always let well enough alone, and I have had just about glory enough for one day, let us all go to the bar and liquor."

This called forth a loud laugh at the thimble conjuror's expense; and he tried hard to induce me to take just one chance more, but he might just as well have sung psalms to a dead horse, for my mind was made up; and I told him, that I looked upon gambling as about the dirtiest way a man could adopt to get through this dirty world; and that I would never bet anything beyond a quart of whisky upon a rifle shot, which I considered a legal bet, and gentlemanly and rational amusement. "But all this cackling," says I, "makes me very thirsty; so let us adjourn to the bar and liquor."

He gathered up his thimbles, and the whole company followed us to the bar, laughing heartily at the conjuror; for, as he had won some of their money, they were a sort of delighted to see him beaten with his own cudgel. He tried to laugh too, but his laugh wasn't at all pleasant, and rather forced. The barkeeper placed a big-bellied bottle before us; and after mixing our liquor, I was called on for a toast by one of the company, a chap just about as rough hewn as if he had been cut out of a gum log with a broad axe, and sent into the market without even being smoothed off with a jack plane—one of them chaps who, in their journey through life, are always ready for a fight or a frolic, and don't care the toss of a copper which. "Well, gentlemen," says I, "being called upon for a toast, and being in a slave-holding state, in order to avoid giving offence, and running the risk of being lynched, it may be necessary to premise that I am neither an abolitionist nor a colonisationist, but simply Colonel Crockett of Tennessee, now bound for Texas." When they heard my name, they gave three cheers for Colonel Crockett; and silence being restored, I continued, "Now, gentlemen, I will offer you a toast, hoping, after what I have stated, that it will give offence to no one present; but should I be mistaken, I must imitate the 'old Roman,' and take the responsibility. I offer, gentlemen, 'The abolition of slavery.' Let the work first begin in the two houses of Congress." They drank the toast in a style that satisfied me, that the little magician might as well go to a pig-sty for wool, as to beat round in that part for voters; they were all either for Judge White or Old Tippecanoe. The thimble conjuror having asked the barkeeper how much was to pay, was told there were sixteen smaller, which amounted to one dollar, and he immediately laid down the blunt in one of Biddle's notes.

After setting my face against gambling, Thimblery was obliged to break off conjuring for want of customers, and call it half a day. He came and entered into conversation with me, and I found him a good-natured intelligent fellow, with a keen eye for the main chance. He belonged to that numerous class, that it is perfectly safe to trust as far as a tailor can sling a bull by the tail—but no farther. He told me that he had been brought up a gentleman; that is to say, he was not instructed in any useful pursuit by which he could obtain a livelihood, so that when he found he had to depend upon himself for the necessities of life, he began to suspect that Dame Nature would have conferred a particular favour if she had consigned him to the care of any one else.

Idleness being the mother of all mischief, he had soon taken to very indifferent courses for a livelihood; in short, he commenced the profession of swindler at Natchez. Here he remained till Judge Lynch began his practice in that quarter. This drove him to his shifts in the steam-boats on the river. I asked him to give me an account of Natchez, and his adventures there, and I would put it in the book I intended to write, when he gave me the following, which betrays that his feelings were still somewhat irritated at being obliged to give them leg ball when Judge Lynch made his appearance. I give it in his own words:—

"Natchez is a land of fevers, alligators, niggers, and cotton bales; where the sun shines with force sufficient to melt the diamond, and the word ice is expunged from the dictionary, for its definition cannot be comprehended by the natives; where to refuse grog before breakfast would degrade you below the brute creation; where the evergreen and majestic magnolia tree, with its superb flower, unknown to the northern climes, and its fragrance unsurpassed, calls forth the admiration of every beholder; and the dark moss hangs in festoons from the forest trees like the drapery of a funeral pall: where bears, the size of young jackasses, are fondled in lieu of pet dogs; and knives, the length of a barber's pole, usurp the place of toothpicks; where the filth of the town is carried

off by buzzards, and the inhabitants are carried off by fevers; and where nigger women are knocked down by the auctioneer. Such is Natchez.

The town is divided into two parts, as distinct in character as they are in appearance. Natchez on the hill, situated upon a high bluff overlooking the Mississippi, is a pretty little town, with streets regularly laid out, and ornamented with divers handsome public buildings. Natchez under the hill—where, oh, where, shall I find words suitable to describe the peculiarities of that unholy spot? An odd affair occurred while I was last there," continued Thimblery. "A steam-boat stopped at the landing, and one of the hands went ashore under the hill to purchase provisions, and the adroit citizens of that delectable retreat contrived to rob him of all his money. The captain of the boat, a determined fellow, went ashore in the hope of persuading them to refund—but that wouldn't do. Without further ceremony, assisted by his crew and passengers, some three or four hundred in number, he made fast an immense cable to the frame tenement where the theft had been perpetrated, and allowed fifteen minutes for the money to be forthcoming; vowing, if it was not produced within that time, to put steam to his boat, and drag the house into the river. The money was instantly produced.

I witnessed a sight during my stay there," continued the thimble conjuror, "that almost froze my blood with horror, and will serve as a specimen of the customs of the far south. A planter of the name of Foster, connected with the best families of the state, unprovoked, in cold blood murdered his young and beautiful wife, a few months after marriage. He beat her deliberately to death in a walk adjoining his dwelling, carried the body to the hut of one of his slaves, washed the dirt from her person, and, assisted by his negroes, buried her upon his plantation. Suspicion was awakened, the body disinterred, and the villain's guilt established. He fled, was overtaken, and secured in prison. His trial was, by some device of the law, delayed until the third term of the court. At length it came on; and so clear and indisputable was the evidence, that not a doubt was entertained of the result; when, by an oversight on the part of the sheriff, who neglected swearing into office his deputy who summoned the jurors, the trial was abruptly discontinued, and all proceedings against Foster were suspended, or rather ended.

There exists, throughout the extreme south, bodies of men who style themselves Lynchers. When an individual escapes punishment by some technicality of the law, or perpetrates an offence not recognised in courts of justice, they seize him, and inflict such chastisement as they conceive adequate to the offence. They usually act at night, and disguise their persons. This society at Natchez embraces all the lawyers, physicians, and principal merchants of the place. Foster, whom all good men loathed as a monster unfit to live, was called into court, and formally dismissed. But the Lynchers were at hand. The moment he stepped from the court-house he was knocked down, his arms bound behind him, his eyes bandaged, and in this condition was marched to the rear of the town, where a deep ravine afforded a fit place for his punishment. His clothes were torn from his back, his head partially scalped; they next bound him to a tree; each Lyncher was supplied with a cow-skin whip, and they took turns at the flogging until the flesh hung in ribbons from his body. A quantity of heated tar was then poured over his head, and made to cover every part of his person; they finally showered a sack of feathers on him; and in this horrid guise, with no other apparel than a miserable pair of trousers, with a drummer at his heels, he was paraded through the principal streets at mid-day. No disguise was assumed by the Lynchers; the very lawyers employed upon his trial took part in his punishment.

Owing to long confinement, his gait had become cramped, and his movements were very faltering. By the time the procession reached the most public part of the town, Foster fell down from exhaustion, and was allowed to lie there for a time, without exciting the sympathies of any one—an object of universal detestation. The blood oozing from his stripes had become mixed with the feathers and tar, and rendered his aspect still more horrible and loathsome. Finding him unable to proceed farther, a common dray was brought, and with his back to the horse's tail, the drummer standing over him playing the rogue's march, he was re-conducted to prison, the only place at which he would be received. A guard was placed outside of the jail to give notice to the body of Lynchers when Foster might attempt to escape, for they had determined on branding him on the forehead, and cutting his ears off. At two o'clock in the morning of the second subsequent day, two horsemen with a led horse stopped at the prison, and Foster was with difficulty placed astride. The Lynchers wished to secure him; he put spurs to his beast, and passed them. As he rode by, they fired at him; a ball struck his hat, which was thrown to the ground, and he escaped; but if ever found within the limits of the state, will be shot down as if a price were set on his head.

Sights of this kind," continued Thimblery, "are by no means infrequent. I once saw a gambler, a sort of friend of mine by the way, detected cheating at faro, at a time when the bets were running pretty high. They flogged him almost to death, added the tar and feathers, and placed him aboard a dug-out, a sort of canoe, at twelve at night; and with no other

instruments of navigation than a bottle of whisky and a paddle, set him adrift in the Mississippi. He has never been heard of since, and the presumption is, that he either died of his wounds or was run down in the night by a steamer. And this is what we call Lynching in Natchez."

Thimbleberg had also been at Vicksburg in his time, and entertained as little liking for that place as he did for Natchez. He had luckily made his escape a short time before the recent clearing-out of the sleight-of-hand gentry; and he reckoned some time would elapse before he would pay them another visit. He said they must become more civilised first. All the time he was talking to me, he was seated on a chest, and playing mechanically with his pea and thimbles, as if he were afraid that he would lose the sleight unless he kept his hand in constant practice. Nothing of any consequence occurred in our passage down the river, and I arrived at Natchitoches in perfect health, and in good spirits.

#### NATIONAL SAVINGS BANK.

THE welfare and greatness of states, as well as the comfort and happiness of individuals, depend in a considerable degree upon the exercise of prudence and economy by the people, and the enlightened statesman will therefore be as anxious as the philanthropist to encourage the general cultivation of careful and provident habits. It is creditable to the British legislature that it has not been neglectful of its duty in this respect, and that, in conferring important and peculiar privileges on savings banks, it has greatly increased the efficiency of these excellent institutions, enabling them to hold out many additional inducements to the industrious poor to save a portion of their earnings as a capital, by means of which they may afterwards raise themselves in the social scale, or which may be allowed to lie in the bank, increasing at compound interest, as a fund to meet the demands of a time of sickness or old age.

Banks of deposit for small sums, to suit the circumstances of the operative classes, were commenced in England about thirty years since, and were introduced into Scotland about ten years afterwards. In 1816, the first savings bank was opened in the United States of America, in the city of Philadelphia, and several others were soon after established in different parts of the Union. Similar banks were also erected, and have long been in operation, in France. Wherever such institutions have been established, they have produced very beneficial effects; but nowhere have they been so prosperous, or extensively useful, as in England, on account of the admirable principles on which they have been, for a number of years, conducted in that country. Savings banks, as they at first existed there, and as they still very recently continued to be constituted in Scotland, were private establishments, or joint-stock associations, for the receipt of small deposits, at such rates of interest as circumstances enabled the bank to allow, and the money thus collected was generally lodged in some other bank, or invested in the public funds; the depositors in the savings banks, or the conductors of those establishments, being exposed to the risk of whatever loss might be incurred in consequence of the variations in the prices of stocks purchased by them. It appears, also, that many of these banks offered no sufficient guarantee of the security of the funds deposited in them, and that the system on which they were conducted was not such as could effectually check malversation on the part of those entrusted with their management, or secure the best and most prudent administration of their affairs. In this unsatisfactory state, however, the English savings banks were not long allowed to remain. Several acts were successively passed between 1817 and 1826, by their regulation and improvement, and in the year last mentioned the whole of these were consolidated in one statute [9 Geo. IV. chap. 92.] This act, together with another passed in 1833, conferring additional and important privileges on savings banks [3 Will. IV. chap. 14], constitutes the existing law relative to these useful establishments; a law which, by an act passed in 1835, has been extended to Scotland, where it promises soon to produce results as beneficial as those by which it has been followed in the southern division of the island. Already have savings banks on the English system been successfully commenced in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other principal towns; and we believe that similar institutions will ere long be established in all parts of the country.

By the above-mentioned acts of the legislature, it is directed that all the funds deposited in National Security Savings Banks must be paid into the Bank of England on account of government, and that the money so invested shall bear interest at the rate of L.3, 16s. 0½d. per cent. per annum, *whatever may be the fluctuations in the value of the public funds during the term of investment.* Depositors are thus afforded the best of all securities, namely, that of the *whole British nation*; while the National Savings Banks are enabled, after paying all charges upon their establishments, to give a considerably higher rate of interest than the ordinary banks, or even the greater part of private savings banks, allow on deposits. The highest interest which the law allows the National Security Savings Banks to pay, is 2½d. per cent. per diem, or

L.3, 8s. 6½d. per cent. per annum; the difference between this and the rate allowed on the money invested by them in government securities being reserved as a fund for the payment of the officials of the banks, and other necessary expenses. The rate of interest which is generally paid by these banks, is 3½ per cent., or L.3, 6s. 8½d. per cent. per annum; and whatever is left, after defraying all charges, is allowed to accumulate as a surplus fund.

Deposits of from one shilling to thirty pounds may be received by these banks, but no individual depositor is allowed to lodge more than thirty pounds in one year, or than L.150 in whole. Charitable and provident institutions may lodge funds to the amount of L.100 in a single year, or L.300 in all; and friendly societies are permitted to deposit the whole of their funds, whatever may be their amount. Compound interest is given on the sums lodged, the interest being added to the principal at the end of each year in some banks, and the end of each half-year in others, and interest afterwards allowed on the whole. Any depositor may receive, on demand, the money lodged by him, if it do not amount to a considerable sum; and even in that case it will be returned on a few days', or at most two or three weeks' notice. Practically, in Edinburgh at least, payment is always made on demand.

In addition to the important privileges conferred upon savings banks by previous enactments, the statute 3 Will. IV. chap. 14, secures to the depositors in such banks peculiar advantages in the purchase of government annuities for an amount not exceeding twenty pounds. Purchasers of deferred annuities—that is, of those which do not commence until after a certain number of years—are allowed to make their payments in such sums and at such times as may best suit them, provided the full amount annually payable is lodged before the expiry of each year. Should the intending purchaser of a deferred annuity become unable or unwilling to complete his payments, the money he has advanced will be returned to him; and should he die before the annuity becomes due, the full amount of his deposits will be paid to his heirs or executors.

The wisest and most effectual provisions are made for ensuring the proper management of the affairs of these banks. Each must have a certain number of trustees and managers, whose services are performed gratuitously, besides a treasurer, actuary, cashier, clerks, &c.; all of whom must give security, by bond, to such amount as the directors of the establishment may judge sufficient. No portion of the funds invested in government security can be withdrawn, except on the authority of an order signed by several of the trustees and managers. Detailed reports of the transactions of each bank must periodically be forwarded to the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt, and also exhibited to the depositors at the bank office. It may be of use to add, that the money deposited is consigned daily to the safe custody of a bank, such as the Bank of Scotland, and is thence regularly transferred to the Bank of England. Any doubt, therefore, as to the security which is offered, would be quite absurd. When the perfect safety of the system is contrasted with the insecure practice of placing money at interest in the hands of private persons, as is unhappily too often done, no one in his senses would for a moment hesitate which mode of disposal he should prefer.

Such is a brief account of the principles on which the National Savings Banks are founded, and which have rendered them so successful in England. We cannot give a stronger proof of their extensive usefulness there, than the fact, that the funds deposited in the English savings banks amounted, in November 1835, to no less than sixteen millions and a half of money. In the Exeter bank alone, the deposits are said to amount to about eight hundred thousand pounds sterling; and those of Liverpool and Manchester had, last year, accumulated capitals to the extent of L.345,000 and L.280,000 respectively. In Scotland, the funds lodged in savings banks have been, comparatively, very small; not exceeding, it is believed, one-hundredth part of the amount collected in England; but now that the benefits of the national security system have been extended to this part of the kingdom, there can be no reason to doubt, that the almost proverbially frugal and prudent habits of its population will speedily enable them to rival their English fellow-subjects in the comparative amount of their deposits. It is yet only a few months since the first Scottish savings bank on the English system was established in Edinburgh, and already it has become the recipient of deposits to a large amount. On the 24th of August last, or within four months from the opening of this bank, it had obtained about L.30,000, from 3800 depositors; and since that date the deposits are steadily increasing in number. Deducting several large sums lodged by charitable institutions and friendly societies, it appears that the average amount of the deposits of private individuals is almost L.9 each. It is worthy of remark, that a very large proportion of those who have thus been laying up for themselves a little fund, which is increasing at compound interest, began by depositing only one, or a very few shillings.

In Glasgow, a National Savings Bank, constituted similarly to that of Edinburgh, was commenced some months ago, and measures have been, or will no doubt be, adopted for planting such institutions in every part of the country. To the working classes these banks are calculated to be of very great advantage, and it is therefore to be hoped that they will every

where receive a large share of popular support. As has already been shown, the security they offer is of the very best and most unquestionable description, while the rate of interest they are enabled to afford on deposits, is much higher than is obtained from the ordinary banks. Every well-behaved working man, servant, or other individual of limited means and income, should embrace the earliest opportunity of becoming a depositor in a savings bank. There are very few persons, even in the humblest walks of life, so poor that they cannot, if they are earnestly desirous, *save a little* from their earnings. Where is the man who could not become a *shilling depositor*? or who, after having lodged his first shilling in the bank, could not contrive occasionally to add another to the incipient fund? By abstaining from some little luxury or temporary gratification, almost every one might save as much as would suffice for a weekly deposit in the working man's bank; and were the contributions regular, however small, they would in a few years, at 3½ per cent. compound interest, amount to something worth having—something which would keep want from the door when sickness or bad trade dried up the ordinary sources of income. And if even the poorest might, by such trifling sacrifices, enable themselves to lay up a little from time to time, those who receive good wages might easily save much more. There are not a few of our artisans whose earnings are sufficient to enable them, without depriving themselves or their families of all the necessities, and many of the comforts of life, to lodge weekly from one to several shillings in a savings bank. But, then, it may be said that the working man cannot save money without curtailing his pleasures, foregoing the social enjoyments of the tavern, or preventing his wife and daughters from gratifying their taste for finery by purchasing showy and expensive articles of dress. It is, however, a very mistaken notion, that he who lays up a portion of his earnings, in the time of youth and health, to provide for the necessities of sickness and age, does so at the expense of present enjoyment. The pleasure arising from a consciousness of having performed an act of duty, is one of the greatest as well as the purest that a man can feel; and we are certain that no self-denying, sober, industrious man, who, while returning from depositing what he could spare in the savings bank, should hear the noisy song, and loud, thoughtless, drunken laugh resounding from the neighbouring tavern, would envy the enjoyments of those within, or think himself less happy with his bank receipt in his pocket, than those who were thus foolishly spending their money, and, at the same time, contracting habits which must, if persevered in, sooner or later unfit them for their employments, and bring themselves and their families to destitution and misery. How many anxious hours does not that man save himself, who is careful to lay up a portion of his gains for a time of need!—how many humiliations and embarrassments does he not avoid!—how much positive suffering is he not often-times spared! When work fails, and his fellow-operatives are already struggling with difficulties, or looking forward with gloomy anticipations of evil, his mind is tranquil; for he knows that he has a little fund—the fruit of his own honest industry and persevering economy—which will be enough, nay, more than sufficient, to support himself and his family till better days come round. If he meet with an accident which for a time unfits him for his daily toil, or if disease invades his home, and seizes upon himself or those who depend upon him, he is not obliged, like his improvident fellow-workmen in similar circumstances, to fall into debt, or undergo the humiliation of accepting aid from the hand of charity. He is prepared for the day of adversity; and, in the accumulated savings of other years, he finds the means of supplying his wants, without sacrificing his independence, or degrading his mind. And when the time of old age draws on, and his eye becomes dim and his arm weak, he finds himself in circumstances which permit of his resting from his labours, and passing the evening of his days in that peace and comfort which the recollection of a well-spent life, and the possession of a fund sufficient for his future maintenance, enable him to enjoy.

People commit a great mistake when they suppose that it is not worth while to attempt to save money until they have a good round sum to begin with. However little they may have to spare, let them commence with that; it will soon, if they persevere in their additions to it, swell up to be so large as to surprise and delight them. Whenever they have a shilling which they do not find themselves under the necessity of expending, they should hasten to place it out of harm's way in the savings bank. If they carry it about in their pockets, or lock it past in a drawer, something or other may occur to induce them to part with it again, when they would not have gone to withdraw it from the bank for that purpose. Besides, when once deposited in the bank, it is constantly increasing in value; whereas, if allowed to lie in a drawer at home, it would never become more than the original shilling. To show how greatly money accumulates at compound interest, we may state, that, while one pound per annum for one hundred years would be no more than one hundred pounds, the same annual sum, at compound interest, would, in an equal space of time, amount to L.662, 12s. 2½d.

Good workmen in many trades earn from eighteen to twenty-two, or twenty-four shillings per week, and some operatives receive considerably more than the

largest in those positions. Many others when they are free which if a you in lodge of one have a pour when I shilling ten ye enable if he d to save he mig sary o would bank, ten ye contin accum male deposi much marrie persev amass service afterw or the To classes would firmne in this g it. C which lected tages, otherw be dis sitors surer and h

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largest of these sums. How wise would it then be in those who are in the receipt of such wages, to deposit a shilling or two every week in the savings bank! Many young men among the working classes find it extremely difficult to procure household furniture and other articles necessary for a domestic establishment when they marry; and in order to obtain these, they are frequently obliged to burden themselves with debts which they are afterwards but ill able to discharge. But if a youthful mechanic were to persevere for ten years in lodging, weekly, in the savings bank, the small sum of *one shilling*, he would, at the end of that period, have accumulated a fund of rather more than thirty pounds, to defray the expenses of furnishing his house when he resolved to take a wife; and if instead of one shilling, he deposited *two*, he would, at the end of the ten years, have fully sixty pounds—a sum sufficient to enable him to commence a small business for himself, if he desired to do so. Again, if a farm servant were to save four pounds per annum from his wages, which he might in most cases do, after making every necessary outlay for decent and comfortable clothing, he would, by depositing this sum annually in the savings bank, have amassed, including interest, at the end of ten years, a little capital of L.46, 11s. 2d.; and by continuing the same system for ten years longer, his accumulations would amount to L.111, 3s. 9d. Female servants might, in like manner, by periodically depositing a portion of their wages, accumulate as much as would, in ten or twelve years, be a desirable marriage portion; or, if they remained single, and persevered in their economical conduct, they might amass as much before they became old and unfit for service, as would afford them the means of subsistence afterwards, without being a burden on their relations or the public.

To every individual of the poorer and industrious classes, be he an artisan, husbandman, or servant, we would say, adopt a resolution, and adhere to it with firmness, to lodge every shilling you can possibly spare in the savings bank. None are *too young* to begin this good work, and none are *too old* to take a part in it. Circumstances are every now and then arising, in which the man who, by his prudent conduct, has collected a little money, is enabled to obtain many advantages, and enjoy much satisfaction, which he could not otherwise procure; and we can assure all who may be disposed to begin to economise and become depositors in the savings bank, that they could not adopt a surer mode of promoting their own temporal welfare and happiness.

### THE NEGRO,

#### AN INCIDENT IN REAL LIFE.

ONE winter evening, when "norland winds were piping" loudly, but harmlessly, around the walls of our old substantial English dwelling, our whole family, consisting of four persons, to wit, my father and mother, my sister and myself, were sitting before a cheerful fire, enjoying that dim delicious hour that intervenes between the night and the day, ere shutters are closed, or candles placed on the table. On the present occasion, this hour was spun out to an unusual length, and yet not one of us felt inclined to have the lights brought in. My father, who had been much abroad during his life, was peculiarly animated in his narration of the various scenes he had witnessed, and our questions ever and anon stimulated him to some fresh recollection. A pause at last ensued, however; and the close of the twilight enjoyment seemed inevitable, when my sister put a question which prolonged it for a considerable time further. "What," said she, "was the happiest passage, father, in your life?" Bless her dear heart! I had the candles been flaring upon the table, she would not have put that question. She was then eighteen, and the blissful dream of love was uppermost in her thoughts. But my father's reply had no reference to that subject, as the reader will learn, if he has patience enough to peruse the following story, as it came from the narrator's lips.

"I shall tell you, my children," said our father, "what passage in my life gives me most satisfaction in the retrospect. Soon after your mother had united her fate with mine, I fell into a respectable and profitable business in New York, where, as you are aware, that competency was earned, which now enables me to pass the evening of life in comfort in my native England. The occupation which I followed required my daily presence for some hours in the centre of that city, where I met the parties with whom I had business connections. The time which I generally chose for this purpose was the hottest part of the day, when every one almost is within doors, and there was less chance of missing my object. The streets at this period of the day are often remarkably empty, only a straggler being visible here and there. It was on one of these business visits, that I saw, in a back street, two men, an Irishman and a negro, jostling, or rather struggling with each other. There was no other object in the street to divert my attention, and I therefore, almost involuntarily, kept my eyes fixed upon the men. The negro was a powerful, athletic man, and had evidently the better in the struggle, which speedily became a complete wrestle. The

Irishman felt his inferiority, and, becoming irritated, raised his arm, and gave his opponent a tremendous blow, which felled him to his knees. The Irishman after this threw himself into a defensive attitude, and on the black raising himself from the ground, blows were rapidly interchanged by the parties. All this passed almost instantaneously, and the issue was equally speedy. The negro struck his adversary on the side of the head with sufficient force to drive him to the ground. The unfortunate Irishman's head came in contact with a stone, and his skull was fractured. Within a few moments after the fall, he was dead!

No one was near enough to witness the course of this affair but myself. A crowd, however, soon collected on the spot, and as the street was chiefly inhabited by the labouring Irish, the assemblage was principally composed of that nation. The injured man was carried into a house to receive medical assistance, and I, losing sight of the negro, proceeded on my way home.

My own affairs occupied so much of my time and attention, that the unhappy incident I had witnessed, passed almost entirely from my mind. A few mornings after it happened, however, I was much shocked to perceive by the newspapers that the negro had been committed to prison on a charge of wilful murder, several Irishmen having sworn before the coroner that they had seen the black strike the deceased with a stone. To give colour to this assertion, one of them had the audacity to bring forward what the newspapers called 'the fatal stone.' Horrified at such villany as this, I instantly formed the resolution of going forward at the trial, and telling the truth, as I had witnessed it. Your mother and my friends attempted in vain to dissuade me, on the ground that I would inevitably incur, by such conduct, the hatred of the lower orders of the Irish, who, disappointed of their victim, might wreak their revenge on me. A sense of duty to the negro and to justice enabled me, thank heaven, to resist these representations, though reason admitted their feasibility. 'The poor negro is, like myself, in a land of strangers,' said I; 'he is far from the hearth of his infancy, and, perhaps, has not one friend in the world. He is of a persecuted and despised race; and come what may, I am resolved that he shall at least have the advantage of having the truth stated regarding the melancholy accident in which he has been involved.' Recollect, my children, that this was only my duty, and that the peculiar circumstances of the case alone gave my resolve—if indeed it did possess—any merit.

On the morning of the trial I was in attendance at the court-house. On applying for admittance to the grand jury room, I was informed that a true bill had been found against the negro, and that the gentlemen on the jury had given orders for the admission of no more witnesses, being perfectly satisfied with the evidence laid before them. I was not to be put off, however, in this manner, but forced my way, almost in spite of the attending official, into the room, and, after relating the whole of my story to the grand jury, was admitted as an evidence. At the same time, the true bill already found was held still as the conclusion to which these gentlemen had come, and the poor negro's life was thus left dependent on the effect of my testimony at the trial.

The cause came on. Witness after witness swore to the same facts, until the jury were thoroughly satisfied, and the court impatient to hear the sentence pronounced against a wretch so vile as the black seemed to be. He, poor fellow, seemed more thunderstruck at the deliberate falsehoods uttered, than alarmed at his dangerous predicament. No voice was lifted up in his favour; no eye glanced on him with compassion or sympathy; friendly and hopeless, he sat like a being of an inferior kind among his fellow-men. I was called at length, and gave a plain and full statement of the facts of the case: 'that I was the only person in the street, besides the deceased and the prisoner, at the time of the occurrence; that I knew neither of the parties: that the Irishman struck the negro first, bringing him on his knees with the blow, and causing the blood to gush from his nose; that the black rose, and wiping the blood from his face with his left hand, after a short struggle, with the same hand gave the Irishman a blow on the side of the head, which drove him to the ground, where his head, striking the curbstone, was fatally injured; and that no stone could possibly be in the negro's hand without my observing it.'

I feel pleasure, my children, in stating, for the honour of human nature, that a buzz of satisfaction ran through the court-room at the conclusion of my story. My own character and station in life, together with the total absence of interested motives, caused the entire overthrow of the previous evidence, and compassion and sympathy for the accused took the place of anger and abhorrence in every breast. The counsel for the prosecution alone, as was natural perhaps, acted as if unsatisfied. He cross-examined me very closely, and made me repeat so often the manner in which the negro struck the deceased, and with which hand he did it, that my patience became in the end exhausted, and I brought matters to a conclusion by suiting the action to the word, and applying my fist pretty smartly to the side of his own head. The solemnity of the occasion could not restrain the laughter that broke forth, and the barrister sat down, satisfied, it appeared, at length, and somewhat chop-fallen. The jury, without the slightest hesitation, acquitted the prisoner of the charge of murder, and returned a

verdict of manslaughter. He was sentenced to be imprisoned for some months; but this was merely formal, for in a few days he was restored to perfect liberty."

"Did you ever hear of the negro afterwards?" interrupted my sister.

"I never saw him more than two or three times. The first time was about a month after the trial, when, in passing an oyster shop or cellar, a voice called out, 'Massa G—! Massa G—!' I turned, and recognised in the owner of the store the unfortunate negro. His gratitude for the service which accident had enabled me to do for him, was written in every line of his countenance. He compelled me to taste a few of his oysters, and anxiously pressed me to inform him of my residence, that he might carry thither his whole stock as a present for me. 'Ah! massa,' said he, 'when me stand at bar without friend, and when me saw 'pectable gentleman go in box, me tink, what! you going to hang me too! But when me heard massa speak true, me tank God for sending one gentleman to speak my cause. De blessing will be answered from de sky which poor nigger speak for Massa G—. Me could not help cry de first time many year.' And the tears again ran down his cheeks as he spoke.

This passage of my life," continued my father, "if not the happiest at the time, is at least one of the most pleasing to look back upon. And this, my children, is the best test of all happy passages in life."

"Did you suffer nothing for your behaviour from those wretches of Irishmen?" asked my sister; "those vindictive—" "Hush, Betsy," said my father; "do not vent general reflections, as I fear you were about to do, upon a nation which has shown so many great and good men in the list of her sons, and whose every error has been owing to ignorance, and, it may be, hard usage. Those Irishmen who were connected with the affair I have described, were beings who had never enjoyed opportunities of education, and their errors ought not to be assumed as a ground for general reproach to their country. You will, I hope, see such things more clearly as you grow older."

Dear little Betsy did see these things more clearly as she grew older, for she is now the happy wife of as good a man as ever lived, and he is an Irishman. Heigho! how time flies!—her eldest girl, I fear me, will make me, some day soon, a granduncle!

### SEPULCHRAL ODDITIES.

UNDER this title we propose to string up a few of the most curious of those epitaphs, inscribed and uninscribed, which are qualified to create mirth. For the fact, that men in all ages have indulged their humour in this way, we shall not attempt either to account or to apologise. If the selections we make shall succeed in innocently beguiling an idle hour, our object will be accomplished.

Before proceeding to those epitaphs in which a design to create mirth has presided over the composition, we shall present some examples of a class in which the same effect is brought about by the mere simplicity of the writers.

By an affectionate wife on her husband:

O cruel Death! how could you be so unkind  
As to take *he* before, and leave *me* behind?  
You should have taken both of us, if either,  
Which would have been more agreeable to the survivor.

In Biddeford churchyard, Devon:

The wedding day appointed was,  
And wedding clothes provided;  
But ere that day did come, alas!  
He sickened and he died.

In Prestonpans churchyard, Haddingtonshire:

William Matthison here lies,  
Whose age was forty-one;  
February 17, he dies.  
Went Isabel Mitchell from;  
Who was his married wife  
The fourth part of his life.  
The soul it cannot die,  
Though the body be turned to clay,  
Yet meet again they must,  
At the last day.  
Trumpet shall sound, archangels cry,  
"Come forth Isabel Mitchell, and meet Will  
Matthison in the sky!"

In Banbury churchyard, Oxfordshire:

Here do lie our dear boy,  
Whom God hath taken from us;  
And we do hope that he shall go to be,  
For he can never come back again to us.

In Montrose churchyard, Forfarshire:

Here lies the bodies of George Young and Isabel Guthrie, and all their posterity for fifty years backwards. November 1797.  
In the churchyard of Arbroath, Forfarshire:  
Here lies Alexander Peter, present town-treasurer of Arbroath, who died the 12 January 1830.

Such a treasurer was not since, nor yet before,  
For common work, calais, brigs, and schair;  
Of all others he did excel;  
He devised our school, and he hung our bell.

On General Tulley:

Here lies General Tulley,  
Aged 103 years fully;  
Nine of his wives beside him doth lie,  
And the tenth must lie here when she doth die.

In Grantham churchyard:

John Pattryman, which lyeth here,  
Was aged 84 years.  
And near this place his mother lies,  
Also his sister when he dies.

In Llaunmyreck churchyard, Montgomeryshire:

Here lies John Thomas  
And his children dear;  
Two buried at Oswestry,  
And one here.

## In Rippon cathedral :

Here lyeth  
John James,  
The old cook of Newby, who was a faithful servant to his  
master, and an upright, downright, honest man.  
Ran among stones  
Do lie fou still,  
While the soul wanders  
Even where God will!—1707.

## In a village churchyard in Norfolk :

Here lies James Dunn,  
Shot by a gun.

## In Twickenham churchyard :

Here lie I,  
Killed by a sky-  
Rocket in my eye.

## In a Scottish country churchyard :

Who lies here?  
I Johnny Dow.  
Hoo! Johnny, is that you?  
Ay, man, but a'm dead now.

## Upon Roger Norton :

Here lies outwomb'd old Roger Norton,  
Whose sudden death was only brought on,  
Trying one day his corn to mow off,  
The razor slipp'd and cut his toe off;  
The toe, or rather what it grew to,  
An inflammation quickly flew to,  
The parts then took to mortifying,  
And poor old Roger took to dying.

Conceits in thought and eccentricities in expression  
are the basis of the oddity of some epitaphs, of which  
the following are specimens :—

## In the New Church, Amsterdam :

Effici nyl.

These are Flemish words meaning *exactly*. They are  
engraved on a very ancient monument of whitish  
marble, on which there is also represented a pair of  
slippers of an old fashion. The story is, that a man  
tolerably rich, and who dearly loved good eating, took  
it into his head that he was only to live a certain num-  
ber of years, and no longer. Anxious to leave no-  
thing unenjoyed, he made a calculation of his fortune,  
so as to make it last exactly the same time with his  
life. It happened that he was not deceived in either  
of his computations, for he died precisely at the time  
he had prescribed to himself, and had then so far ex-  
hausted his estate, that, after paying his debts, there  
was nothing left but a pair of slippers. His relatives  
buried him creditably, and caused the slippers to be  
carved upon his tomb, with the above laconic words.  
In the church of St Flavian's, by Mount Fiascone :

Est. est. est. ppr. vivum. est. hic.  
So de Fies. & mens. mortis. est.

This mysterious-looking epitaph commemorates a Ger-  
man bishop and a droll story. The prelate, being  
much of a good liver, used, in travelling, to send his  
steward before him to the various inns, in order to as-  
certain if the wine was good. If he found such to be  
the case, he was to chalk the word *est* (it is) in capi-  
tals upon the door; if very good, *est, est*; and the  
bishop had ever good reason to trust to the major-  
domo's taste. Being arrived at Mount Fiascone, the  
steward found the Muscadel wine so delicious, that  
he did not scruple to triple the *est*; and the bishop so  
coincided in his taster's opinion, that, from an inor-  
dinate indulgence in it, he died in a few days. He  
bequeathed ten thousand crowns to the hospital there,  
on condition that, on Whitsunday, they should an-  
nually give, to all persons who might come for it,  
as much Muscadel wine and bread as they could eat  
and drink at a meal. On his monument, inscribed  
as above, there are two escutcheons, and as many  
drinking glasses.

## From Camden :

Here lyeth Richard a Proesse,  
One thousand, five hundred, eighty-nine,  
Of March xx day;  
And he that will die after him—may.

## On one who died of hypochondria :

Death, by a conduct strange and new,  
Prov'd here th' effect and motive too;  
Nod met the blow he meant to fly,  
And dy'd, because he fear'd to die.

## In the churchyard of Storrington, Sussex :

Here lies the body of Edward Hilde;  
We laid him here because he died.  
We had rather  
It had been his father.  
If it had been his sister,  
Few would have mis'd her.  
But since 'tis honest Ned,  
No more shall be said.

An epitaph readable sixteen ways, at Gunwallow,  
near Helston, in Cornwall :

Shall we all die  
We shall die all  
All die shall we  
Die all we shall.

## In Haddington churchyard :

Hout, Atropos, hard-hearted hag,  
To cut the shroud o' Jamie Craig!  
For had he lived a woeen mae years,  
He'd been o'er tough for thy auld shears.  
But now he's gone—see mainn we a';  
Was wroless Death's eye shure to fa';  
Rae let us pray that we at last  
May win free Death a canny cast.

Of epitaphs containing conceits or puns upon the  
names of the parties, the following are specimens :—  
On a person named Cave, in the church of Barrow-  
upon-Soar, Leicestershire :

Here in this Grave, there lies a Cave,  
We call a Cave a Grave—  
If Cave be Grave, and Grave be Cave,  
Then, reader, judge, I crave,  
Whether doth Cave here lie in Grave,  
Or Grave here lie in Cave.  
If Grave in Cave here buried lie,  
Then, Grave, where is thy victory?  
Go, reader, and report, here lies a Cave  
Who conquers Death, and buries his own Grave.

## On Mr Stone :

Jerusalem's curse is not fulfill'd in me,  
For here a stone upon a Stone you see.

## On Captain John So :

So did he live,  
So did he die,  
So, so, say you so,  
So let him lie.

## On John Death :

Here lies John Death, the very name  
That went away with a cousin of his name.

On a gentleman named Sand, in one of the churches  
in London :

Who would live by others' breath?  
Fame deceives the dead man's trust.  
Even our names much change by death,  
Sand I was, but now am Dust.

The following contain allusions to the professions  
of the parties :

## On an innkeeper, at Barnwell, near Cambridge :

Man's life is like a winter's day,  
Some only breakfast and away,  
Others to dinner stay, and are full fed,  
The oldest man but sups and goes to bed.  
Long is his life who lingers out the day,  
Who goes the soonest has the least to pay;  
Death is the waiter; some few run on tick,  
And some, alas! must pay the bill to Nick!  
Though I owed much I hope long trust is given,  
And truly mean to pay all debts in heaven.

On Robert Sleath, who kept the turnpike at Wor-  
cester, and was noted for having once demanded toll  
of George III., when his majesty was going on a visit  
to Bishop Hurd :

On Wednesday last old Robert Sleath  
Passed through the turnpike gate of death.  
To him would death no toll abate,  
Who stopped the king at Worcester gate.

On George Miles, blacksmith, who died in 1719; in  
Walton churchyard, near Liverpool :

My anvil and hammer I've reclined,  
My bellows also lost their wind,  
My fire's extinct, my forge decay'd,  
My vice if the dust my friends have laid,  
My coals are spent, my iron's gone,  
My nails are drove, my work is done.

In Stepney churchyard, near London—on Captain  
John Dunch, who died in 1697, aged 67 :

Though Boreas' blasts and Neptune's waves  
Have tossed me on the earth was he,  
In spirit of both, by God's decree,  
I anchor here below,  
Where I do now at anchor ride,  
With many of our fleet;  
Yet once again I must set sail,  
Our admiral, Christ, to meet.

## On Dr Walker, who wrote a book called "Particles:"

Here lie *Halker's Particles*.

## On Robin Masters, undertaker :

Here lieth Robin Masters—Faith, 'twas hard  
To take away our honest Robin's breath;  
Yet surely Robin was full well prepared,  
Robin was always looking out for death.

On David Forrest, a fowler, in Cupar churchyard,  
Fifehire :

Here David Forrest's corpse asleep doth lie,  
His soul with Christ enjoys tranquillity.  
A famous fowler on the earth was he,  
And for the same shall last his memory.  
His years were fifty-five—now he doth sing  
Glorie in those heavens, where roth of game doth spring.

## On a collier :

Here lies the Collier, John of Nashes,  
By whom death nothing gain'd, he swore:  
For living he was dust and ashes,  
And being dead, he is no more!

## On Little Stephen, a noted fiddler in Suffolk :

Stephen and Time are now both even;  
Stephen beat Time, now Time's beat Stephen.

## On an old woman, who kept a pottery shop at Chester :

Beneath this stone lies old Katherine Gray,  
Changed from a busy life to lifeless clay;  
By earth and sky was cut her self,  
But now is turned to earth herself.  
Ye weeping friends, let me advise,  
Abate your grief and dry your eyes;  
For what avails a flood of tears?  
Who knows but, in a run of years,  
In some tall pitcher or broad pan,  
She in her shop may be again!

## On Sparges, a miser :

Here lyeth father Sparges,  
Who died to save charges.

## On a juggler :

Death came to see thy tricks, and cut in twain  
Thy thread. Why didst not make it whole again?

Intemperance has given occasion to not a few whim-  
sical epitaphs.

## On a glutton :

Otho, entombed within this globe so hallow'd,  
Had in his lifetime many acres swallow'd;  
But in return to this voracious limb,  
The earth in justice now has swallowed him.

## Another :

On Randolph Peter,  
Of Oriz, the Easter:  
Whoe'er you are, tread softly, I entreat you,  
For if he chance to wake, be sure he'll eat you.

## From the churchyard of Thetford, in Norfolk :

My grandmother was buried here,  
My cousin Jane, and two uncles dear,  
My father perished with a mortification in his thighs,  
My sister dropped down dead in the Minories;  
But the reason why I am here interred, according to my thinking,  
Is owing to my good living and hard drinking.  
If therefore, good Christians, you wish to live long,  
Don't drink too much wine, brandy, or any thing strong.  
Oldys thus translates from Camden an epitaph upon  
a tippling red-nosed ballad-maker of the time of Shak-  
speare :

Dead drunk, here Elderton doth lie;  
Dead as he is, he still is dry;  
So of him it may well be said,  
Here he, but not his thirst, is laid.

The loquacity, imperiousness, and obsequatory ha-  
bits of the fair sex, have also, as might be expected,  
given rise to various humours of the same kind.

## On a scolding wife, who died in her sleep :

Here lies the quintessence of noise and strife,  
Or, in one word, here lies a scolding wife;  
Had not death took her when her mouth was shut,  
He durst not for his ears have touched the slut.

## On another scold :

Beneath this stone, a lump of clay,  
Lies Arabella Young,  
Who on the twenty-ninth of May  
Began to hold her tongue.

## On a tombstone in Essex :

Here lies the bell man Richard,  
And Mary his wife,  
Their surname was Fritchard,  
They liv'd without strife:  
And the reason was plain—  
They abounded in riches,  
They no care had nor pain,  
And the wife wore the breeches.

In the churchyard of Hoddam in Dumfriesshire there  
is an old monument, which formerly bore the follow-  
ing inscription :

Here lies a man, who all his mortal life  
Past mending clocks, but could not mend his wyfe.  
The 'larum of his bell was ne'er as shrill  
As was her tongue, aye clackling like a mill.  
But now he's gone—oh, whither? none can tell—  
I hope beyond the sound o' Mally's bell.

In the same burial-place there is an epitaph which  
ought perhaps to have been rather classed with those  
remarkable for naïveté :

To the memory of Mary Clow, &c.

A virtuous wife, a loving mother,  
And one esteemed by all that knew her.

And to be short, to her praise, she was the woman that Solo-  
mon speaks of in the xxi. chapter of the book of Proverbs,  
from the 10th verse to the end.

So far posthumous flattery—now for posthumous sa-  
tire. After the monument had been set up, a candid  
schoolmaster named Irving, the author of a poetical  
tract well known in Scotland under the name of  
Lag's Elegy, wrote upon the pedestal the following  
verses :

She was the wife! oh Solomon, thou fool,  
To make a pattern of this grumbling toot!  
She clothe her house in silk and scarlet fine!  
Say rather 't the linsey-woolsey twine.  
Her husband 'mongst the elders at the gate!  
Yes—known for nothing but an empty pate.  
For gadding down whole chappins o' smug beer,  
And selling meal and maut a groat o'er dear:  
Such were the honest silly Clows—say Clowns,  
Which every roll of honest fame disowns.

And, perhaps, if Irving's were universal, there would  
be few complimentary epitaphs without a similar post-  
script.

## ENGRAVING ON METAL AND STONE.

THE art of engraving differs considerably in its mode  
of application, according to the nature of the materials  
required to be cut, as well as the fancy of the artist.  
One of the chief departments of the art, is copper and  
steel plate engraving; and of that there are several  
varieties—the principal being the *line*, *dot*, *mezzotint*,  
and *aquatint* engraving; which, for the sake of our  
young readers, we shall describe in as simple a manner  
as possible.

The most beautiful, and the most difficult to be per-  
formed, of the above varieties of engraving, is that first  
mentioned, line engraving; which is used in producing  
all those elegant pictorial embellishments which are  
held in the highest estimation. This, as well as  
every other kind of copper-plate engraving, is com-  
menced by a process called *etching*. The plate is made  
perfectly clean on its polished surface, and heated suf-  
ficiently to melt a composition of Asphaltum and Bur-  
gundy pitch, called *etching-ground*, which is rubbed  
upon it, and rendered equal all over, by dabbing with  
a ball of wool covered with silk. The plate is then  
held up for the surface to receive the smoke of a wax  
taper, until it is rendered black and glossy, into which  
state it comes on not being suffered to cool during the  
process. These preparations being effected, and the  
plate becoming cold, the *etching-ground*, which is not  
thicker than a coat of varnish, is found to be of a  
hard consistence, and ready to receive the tracing of  
the subject intended to be etched. The previous pre-  
paration of the subject is a very important step in  
the process. The subject is drawn upon transparent  
paper with a black-lead pencil, and being laid with the  
face downwards on the *etching-ground*, the lines or  
marks of the drawing are pressed upon it with such  
force that they are left on the ground on removing  
the paper. This is called *transferring*; and, of course,  
the excellence of the representation to be produced,  
depends on the excellence of the drawing. Engravers,  
therefore, in copying paintings, require to possess a  
degree of skill in the art of delineation hardly inferior  
to that of the original artist. The drawing being  
transferred in the manner described, the engraver ap-  
plies his tool, or *etching needle*, over the lines, care-  
fully removing the *ground*, at the same time pressing  
sufficiently hard to scratch the surface of the copper.  
A wall of wax is now placed round the margin of the  
plate, and into the enclosure so formed, aquafortis is  
poured, to the depth of half an inch. This aquafortis



decomposes or bites into the copper where the etching-ground has been removed. During this process, globules of air arise from the decomposition, and these are carefully removed with a feather, to allow free scope to the biting liquid. The length of time employed in biting the plate is regulated by the depth required, also by the state of the atmosphere; in ordinary cases, the operation may be performed in about an hour. When it is ascertained that the plate is properly acted upon, the aquafortis is poured off, the wall of wax removed, and the ground cleared with spirits of turpentine. The plate is now said to be etched, and when printed from in this state, exhibits the appearance of a pen and ink sketch.

To this state of etching, but regulated by the nature of the subject, professional engravers bring the plates to be finished in the *line* manner. Different gradations of power are given by the aquafortis, and parts are rebitten to the depth required; after which, the light parts are put in with a sharp needle. Other parts are then cut with gravers of various sizes and forms, suited to the lines which will best express the respective objects. The engraver, in thus finishing his work, rests the plate on a small cushion, so that it may be conveniently turned with the left hand, while the incisions are cut with the graving tool by the right. These lines are re-entered, crossed in various directions, or cut in the spaces between the diagonal crossings, until the desired effect is produced. Landscapes and architecture are generally executed with the needle and aquafortis: portraits and historical subjects are chiefly cut with the graver.

Dotting is a style of engraving, in which dots of various sizes and depths in the copper, instead of lines, express the forms and shades of the subject. They are first carefully made in the etching-ground, then bitten, and some parts stopped out, to prevent the further action of the aquafortis on them; while other parts receive additional bitings, till the subject has the power required. After this, the plate is cleaned, dotted up with the needle, stippled with the graver, or rebitten, until all the gradations of force are communicated. This style is generally used for portraits.

Mezzotinto engraving is in a great measure a reversal of those styles already described; being the reducing of a darkened surface of copper to one that is light. The operation is generally commenced by grounding or puncturing the plate with a circular-faced tool, on the edge of which are a number of points; this instrument, by being rocked regularly over the surface of the copper in every direction, covers it so completely with marks or spots, that, if it were printed from, the impression would be perfectly black. On this dark ground the subject is traced, directing where the various gradations of light and half-tint are to be scraped out; which operation is performed with tools shaped like a surgeon's lancet, while the highest lights are burnished with a polished steel instrument, until the proper effect is produced. This style of engraving is used chiefly for portraits and historical subjects. It has a pleasing soft appearance, but it is understood that the copper soon fails in producing strong impressions, and it is therefore not well adapted for subjects of which great numbers are required.

Aquatint engraving is an exceedingly complicated style of producing pictorial effect; but being executed at a lower price than that of the kinds previously mentioned, it is commonly resorted to for embellishing books of travels, or other works requiring illustrations of a simple nature. In appearance, it resembles tinting with Indian ink, and the prints are susceptible of being finished with water-colours. In commencing the process of aquatint engraving, the plate must be cleaned with an oil rubber, which is a strip of woollen cloth rolled up hard, to about two inches in diameter; this, with a little impalpable crocus and sweet oil, will give to the copper-plate, when perfectly cleaned from the oil, a proper surface to receive the ground, which is made with pulverised sifted rosin and spirits of wine, incorporated by gentle heat, till it appears like a varnish. This composition is poured over the plate while placed in a slanting position, so as to permit the superfluous liquid to run off. The operation must be so managed as to preserve an equal surface. As soon as the granulation, or drying of the grain, appears, the plate must be placed horizontally, when the spirit will evaporate, and the particles of rosin will adhere to the copper. When dry, the surface appears evenly covered, as with a diminutive honey-comb, and perfectly smooth. On this the subject is traced, and the highest lights painted out with a sable pencil in a mixture of turpentine-varnish and lamp-black, so as to prevent the aquafortis acting on those parts. The margin is also covered, and on it a wall of wax is fixed, with a spout at one corner. The aquafortis is regulated in its strength by the temperature of the weather and the hardness of the copper. Being poured on the plate, it remains until the first gradation of tint is bitten—the aquafortis having acted on the copper between the particles of rosin which adhered to the plate. The aquafortis is then taken off, the plate dried, and this first degree of tint stopped out or covered over with the blackened varnish. When hard, the aquafortis is again poured on, to bite the second degree of tint; and so on until all the tints have in succession been bitten in. The copper must then be cleaned, and a proof taken and compared with the original. A similar or rebiting grain must then be laid on the plate as before; when cold, a composi-

tion of treacle and lamp-black, well mixed, must be used to paint the projections of foliage on lights, or other touches which the masses of tint may require. When these are dry, the whole of the plate must be washed over with a thin coat of varnish reduced with turpentine, which will adhere to the untouched parts of the work. The wall of wax must then be replaced, and clean water poured on; in a short time the water will mix with the treacle touches, and they loosen them. When all appear to be removed, the water is taken off, and aquafortis poured on, and allowed to remain until a sufficient degree of power is given to the touches, and the subject completed. Latterly, aquatint engraving has been in many cases superseded by lithography.

Copper-plates, engraved in any of the styles which we have described, are, unfortunately, from the comparative softness of the metal, incapable of producing a large number of impressions. In the process of printing, they are warmed, and dabbed over with ink; next, the ink is wiped off with a piece of fine canvass, and the surface cleaned with a little whiting on the palm of the hand, leaving the engraved parts untouched; and, lastly, the plate is placed on a level surface, with the paper upon it, and passed under a cylinder covered with many folds of cloth. By this pressure impressions are produced. All this wears down the surface, and takes away the sharpness of the lines, or the strength of the representation. After one thousand impressions, the print becomes faint, and the plate requires retouching with the graving tool. To obviate this imperfection in copper, hardened steel plates have been brought into use; but even these are incapable of executing the number of impressions sometimes required, and the inventive faculty has been tested to the utmost to remedy the defect. This has at length been accomplished. Quite a new art has been discovered, namely, engraving by pressure, which is thus described by Mr Babbage in his work, the *Economy of Machinery and Manufactures*:—"This is one of the most beautiful examples of the art of copying carried to an almost unlimited extent; and the delicacy with which it can be executed, and the precision with which the finest traces of the graving tool can be transferred from steel to copper, or even from hard steel to soft steel, is most unexpected. We are indebted to Mr Perkins for most of the contrivances which have brought this art to once almost to perfection. An engraving is first made upon soft steel, which is hardened by a peculiar process, without in the least injuring its delicacy. A cylinder of soft steel, pressed with great force against the hardened steel engraving, is now made to roll very slowly backward and forward over it, thus receiving the design, but in relief. The cylinder is in its turn hardened without injury; and if it be slowly rolled to and fro with strong pressure on successive plates of copper, it will imprint on a thousand of them a perfect fac-simile of the original steel engraving from which it was made. Thus, the number of copies producible from the same design may be multiplied a thousand-fold. But even this is very far short of the limits to which the process may be extended. The hardened steel roller, bearing the design upon it in relief, may be employed to make a few of its first impressions upon plates of soft steel, and these being hardened become the representatives of the original engraving, and may in their turn be made the parents of other rollers, each generating copper-plates like their prototype. The possible extent to which fac-similes of one original engraving may thus be multiplied, almost confounds the imagination, and appears to be for all practical purposes unlimited. This beautiful art was first proposed by Mr Perkins for the purpose of rendering the forgery of bank-notes a matter of great difficulty; and there are two principles which peculiarly adapt it to that object; first, the perfect identity of all the impressions, so that any variation in the minutest line would at once cause detection; secondly, that the original plates may be formed by the united labours of several artists most eminent in their respective departments; for as only one original of each design is necessary, the expense, even of the most elaborate engraving, will be trifling, compared with the multitude of copies produced from it."

Having now given a rough sketch of the various branches of the art of engraving on metals, we shall conclude with a description of the operations of the seal-engraver, which bear little or no resemblance to those already mentioned, and are performed by quite a distinct class of artists. While the hardest metals are susceptible of being cut by a tool wielded by the hand of the artist, the different kinds of stone required to be operated upon by the seal-engraver are so extremely hard, that a much more powerful instrument than the hand has to be resorted to. The cutting tool is fixed into a turning machine or lathe, and is made to operate while in a rapid rotatory motion. The lathe is of a light and miniature construction, erected on an elevated bench or table in front of the artist, and is moved by a foot-board beneath. The engraver of metal plates sits while at his work, but the seal-engraver in general stands, in order to have greater command over his operations. He likewise requires to be exceedingly steady in the hand, for the slightest error would perhaps be irreparable; therefore, with both his elbows resting on cushions on the bench, and the palm of his left hand leaning on the top of an erect roundish-shaped bolt or pillar, his fingers of both hands are busy in pressing the stone to

the edge of the whirling tool, or guiding it so that it may receive the appropriate indentations. One tool, however, cannot execute all parts of the device. The cutter possesses from one to two hundred tools, varying from a large to a small size. It is also necessary to explain, that the cutting part of each tool is shaped so as to present to the stone a sharp thin edge like the rim of a wheel. (By sticking a small wafer on the point of a pin, and conceiving the edge of the wafer, when turning round, to be the cutting part, a good idea may be obtained of this curious instrument.) As the tool projects horizontally, the artist, by holding the stone beneath it, with its surface to be cut uppermost, is thus enabled to watch the progress of his operation from beginning to end. Sharp as the cutting tools of the seal-engraver are, they would entirely fail in perforating the gems to which they are applied by the lathe, unless they were given an additional sharpness, by means of a foreign material occasionally applied to them while in rapid motion. This material is diamond dust. The diamond is so expensive an article, that the particles used by the seal-engraver are those which have been rejected as waste by the lapidary. These being placed in a hollow steel tube, having a tight-fitting rammer of the same material, a few smart blows on the upper extremity of the rammer reduce the particles to powder. A small portion of this dust is then mixed with a little highly refined oil, and being held to the tool in a state of motion, it is attached to or forced into the metal. If a powerful magnifying glass were taken to examine the tool after its absorption of the diamond dust, its edge would be observed to resemble a rasp or saw, the particles being partly imbedded and fixed in the steel; hence, properly speaking, it is not the tool, but the diamond dust upon it, which cuts the surface of the stone.

To cut an elaborate device, such as a bust or a coat of arms, upon the surface of a cornelian or other gem, a vast deal of care is necessary on the part of the artist. The precise depth of every turn and indentation is matter of serious study, and a momentary heedlessness might have the effect of ruining the work of several days. The operator, however, exercises caution in his ingenious labour. The stone being dimmed by friction, is drawn upon with a brass point to show the subject; the artist first traces the outlines of his figures, next opens them with the bolder tools, and gradually proceeds to the details with finer and finer instruments, frequently stopping to take impressions on wax, to see the effect which has been produced, before he gives the finishing stroke to his workmanship; lastly, the surface is repolished, and the seal completed. As may be supposed, the degree of finish depends on the value of the gem, and the sum which is paid to the artist.

Engraving, in all its branches, is a species of labour which requires payment higher than almost any other department of art; for not only must there be great natural ability or genius brought to the task, but a degree of patience and perseverance beyond what is required in most other employments, while the constant stooping and leaning over the bench is any thing but conducive to health or longevity.

#### THOUGHTS ON COMMONPLACE SUBJECTS.

##### OUT-WORKERS.

AN American gentleman, from Philadelphia, who was travelling in Scotland some years ago, observed to us, that nothing had appeared to him more remarkable since his landing in the country, than the circumstance of women labouring in bands in the fields, like gangs of negroes in the sugar and coffee plantations. "It appears to me," said he, "that you treat your women here very unmercifully—most ungenerally. You degrade the fair sex to the condition almost of beasts of burden. This is a state of things I did not expect to find in Great Britain, though I certainly expected to find it in France and some other parts of the continent. Shame! We treat our women differently in the States; we make them our companions, not our slaves." To this we made the following answer. "What you say, sir, about your having seen women labouring in the fields, is no doubt perfectly true; but your conclusions are rash. You do not seem to be aware of the causes or nature of the practice. In the country parts of the lowlands of Scotland, where agriculture has been so prodigiously improved within these last sixty years, the number of peasantry is exceedingly limited, by the wise policy of an enlargement of farms, and the conducting of the manufacture of corn at the smallest possible expense. By this arrangement, the community are supplied with bread at an exceedingly low price. According to the plan pursued, there are no idlers among our rural population. All work; at least all know that if they do not work, they must starve; for we have no work-houses in the country districts; and it is only the extremely aged and impotent who receive relief from the parishes. Now, sir, the women whom you have seen labouring in the fields, are of the following description: They are the grown-up daughters of ploughmen and other farm-servants, who either cannot get situations as domestics in country gentlemen's or farmers' houses, or who prefer field-labour, or out-work, as they call it, to a confinement in other persons' households. Perhaps some of them have bedridden fathers or mothers, whom they delight in attending upon during the hours of remission from toil, and thus supporting them by their industry, instead of leaving

them to fall a burden upon the public. Surely this is a commendable act of filial duty, not an act to be visited with opprobrium. Others are young widows with small families dependent upon them. They also detest the idea of parochial aid: and how are they to employ themselves but by any kind of honest labour that offers? Others are women who have passed the prime of life without being married, and now, in order to be able to rent a cottage in their native hamlet, and otherwise support a creditable name, independent of every one, do they pursue, in cheerfulness and health, an occupation which is not felt to be particularly burdensome. Thus field-labour is performed by women as much from choice as necessity—never from compulsion, as in the case of your slaves. The wages of these women vary, I believe, from eightpence to tenpence a-day; for this they hoe the fields to clear them of weeds; pick up small stones and throw them into carts; spread manure, not with the bare hands, as in France, but with spades and other suitable instruments; gather potatoes turned up by the plough; thin ridges of turnips, and so forth. None of these employments are over-fatiguing; and, I can assure you, more gleesome and wit are often heard from one of these companies of out-workers, than from a well-filled drawing-room; perhaps, too, there is more real happiness and contentment. Such was our explanation of the causes and nature of female labour in the fields of Scotland, and it was satisfactory to the American, who candidly confessed that this was another of those cases in which travellers ought to be exceedingly cautious in arriving at conclusions regarding the usages of countries in which they were strangers.

#### SPURS TO STOCKINGS.

We have heard that a machine has been invented, and is now in operation somewhere in England, for the knitting of stockings, on the plan of the old knitting process with wires—not weaving them, as in the common stocking-frame. We should like much to have a description of this instrument and its powers. The weaving of stockings in a flat piece, and then closing them with the needle, is liable to a serious objection, which all persons who are in the habit of wearing boots make a standing subject of complaint. Allusion is here made to what is called the *spur* of the loom-weaved stockings. At the heel of every stocking an angular point is usually projected, which cannot in every instance be made to lie close to the foot, and which folds up in a hard lump behind the heel when the boot is drawn on the leg. Perhaps some skilful manufacturers are in the habit of producing their woollen hose without spurs; but as we never saw or heard of loom-made stockings free of such troublesome angularities, it is presumed they are by no means common. The introduction of any plan, therefore, by which people would be able to procure spurless stockings, not to speak of square bag-shaped toes, must be reckoned a decided improvement in this department of the arts.

#### MRS JONES'S JAUNT TO SCOTLAND.

Mrs JONES, an ill-educated would-be genteel London lady, to whom Captain Montreville and his daughter Laura were introduced one evening at tea, was extremely glad to have fresh auditors to her account of her jaunt to Scotland, a country which she looked upon as one of the most outlandish parts of the known world. Perceiving that Montreville was an Englishman, she concluded that nothing but dire necessity could have exiled him to Scotland, whence she understood he had lately come. She inquired what town he lived in, and being answered that his residence was many miles from any town, she held up her hands in pity and amazement. But when she heard that Montreville had been obliged to learn the language of the Highlands, and it was Laura's vernacular tongue, she burst into an exclamation of wonder. "Mercy upon us!" cried she, "can you make that outlandish spluttering so as them savages can know what you say? Well, if I had been among them a thousand years, I should never have made out a word of their gibberish."

"The sound of it is very uncouth to a stranger," said Captain Montreville, "but now I have learnt to like it." And do them there wild men make you wear them little red and green petticoats?" asked Mrs Jones, in a tone of compassionate inquiry. "Oh, no," said Captain Montreville, "they never interfered with my dress. But you seem acquainted with the Highlands. May I ask if you have been there?"

"Ay, that I have, to my sorrow," said Mrs Jones, and forthwith proceeded to recount her adventures. "You see, sir, when Mr Jones married me, he had not been altogether satisfied with his rider, and he thought as he'd go down to Glasgow himself, and do business; and that he'd make it do for his wedding jaunt, and that would be killing two dogs with one stone. Well, you see, we went to Glasgow, where I was first and last eleven days; and I can say for it, it is really a handsome town, and a most good white-stone houses in it. When we'd been about a week in Glasgow, we were to dine one day with Mr Macfarlane, as supplies Mr Jones with gingham; and he talked about some grand house of one of your Scotch dukes, and said as how we mustn't go home without seeing it. So we thought since we had come so far, we might as well see what was to be seen. Well, we went down along the river, which, to say truth, is very pretty, tho' it be not turlur; nor kept near the elms, to a place they call Dunbrin; where there's a rock, for all the world like an ill-made couple loaf, with a slice out of the middle on't; and they told us there was a castle on it—but such a castle! Bless your heart, it wasn't a castle at all! I've seen Windsor Castle, and I'd rather be more like it—no more than nothing at all. However, we slept that night at a very decent sort of an inn; and Mr Jones thought as we were so comfortable, we had best come back to sleep. So as the duke's house was but thirty miles off, we thought if we set off soon in the morning, we might get back at night. So off we set, and went two stages to breakfast, at a place with one of their outlandish names; and to be certain, when we got there, we were so hungry as hounds. Well, we called for hot porridge; and, do but think, there wasn't no such thing to be had for love or money."

Mrs Jones paused to give Laura time for the expression of her pity, but she remained silent, and Mrs Jones resumed: "Well, they brought us a loaf as old as St Paul's, and some good enough butter; so thinks I, I'll make us some good warm toast; for I love to make the best of a bad bargain. So I bid the waiter bring

as the toast-stool; but if you had seen how he stared—why, the poor fellow had never heard of no such thing in his life. Then they showed us a huge mountain, as black as a soot-bag, just opposite the window, and said as we must go up there; but, thinks I, catch us at that; for if we be so off here for breakfast, what shall we be there for dinner. So my husband and I were of a mind upon it, to get back to Glasgow as fast as we could; for, though to be sure it cost us a power of money coming down, yet, thinks we, the first time is the best."

"And what was the name of this poor place where there were no hot rolls for breakfast?" inquired Captain Montreville. "Oh, la," answered the travelled lady, "that was what I asked the waiter often and often, but I never could make head or tail of what he said. Sometimes it sounded like *A rookery*; sometimes like one thing, sometimes like another. So I takes the road-book and looks it out, and it looked something like *A rasher*, only not right spelt. So, thinks I, they'll call it *A rasher*, because there is good bacon here; and I asked the man if they were famous for pigs; and he said, no; they got all their pigs from the manufactory in Glasgow, and that they weren't famous for any thing but fresh herrings, as are caught in that black Loch-Lomond, where they wanted me to go."

"Kate," said Mr Jones to Mrs Jones, setting down his tea-cup, and settling his hands upon his knees. "You know I think you're wrong about them herrings." "Mr Jones," returned the lady, with a look which showed that the herrings had been the subject of former altercation, "for certain the waiter told me that they came out of the loch, and to what purpose should he tell lies about it?"

"I tell you, Kate, that herrings come out of the sea," said Mr Jones. "Well, that loch is a great fresh water sea," said Mrs Jones.

"Out of the salt sea," insisted Mr Jones. "Ay," said Mrs Jones, "them salt herrings as we gets here, but it stands to reason, Mr Jones, that the fresh herrings should come out of fresh water."

"I say, cool is fresh, and doesn't it come out of the sea?" answered me that, Mrs Jones. "It is no wonder the cool is fresh," returned the lady, "when the fishermen keep fresh water running on it day and night." "Kate, it's of no use arguing; I say herrings come out of the sea. What say you, sir?" turning to Captain Montreville.

The captain softened his verdict in the gentleman's favour, by saying that Mrs Jones was right in her account of the waiter's report, though the man, in speaking of "the loch," meant not Loch-Lomond, but an arm of the sea. "I know'd it," said Mr Jones, triumphantly, "for haven't I read it in the newspaper as government offers a reward to any body that'll put most salt upon them Scotch herrings, and isn't that what makes the salt so dear?" So having settled this knotty point to his own satisfaction, Mr Jones again applied himself to his tea.

"Did you return to Glasgow by the way of Loch-Lomond?" inquired Captain Montreville. "Ay," cried Mrs Jones, "that was what the people of the inn wanted us to do; but then I looked out, and seed a matter of fifty of them there savages, with the little petticoats and red and white stockings, loitering and loiling about the inn-door, doing nothing in the world, except waiting till it was dark to rob and murder us all, bless us! So, thinks I, let me not get out from among you, in a whole skin, and catch me in the Highlands again: so as soon as the chaise could be got, we just went the way we came."

"Did you find good accommodation at Glasgow?" said the captain. "Yes," replied Mrs Jones; "but, after all, captain, there's no country like our own; do you know, I never got so much as a buttered muffin all the while I was in Scotland!" This deplorable account of the state of things in the north, was calculated to excite the deepest compassion. The country which cannot produce a buttered muffin, must unquestionably be acknowledged to lie beyond the pale of comfort and civilisation.—*Scot-Critic, by Mrs Brunton.*

#### HARK TO THE STRAIN.

[The following spirited lines occur in the "Life and Adventures of Jonathan Jefferson Whittlaw, or Scenes in the Mississippi," by Mrs Trollope; a work in 3 vols, lately published by Bentley, London.]

Hark to the strain!

Let me hear it again—

'Tis a spell that can waft us o'er land and o'er sea;

Oh hark to the strain!

Is it pleasure or pain

That sends my heart, Fatherland! throbbing to thee?

It is glorious, when Fancy has taken the helm,  
To mount the gay bark that shall bear us along,  
And to bound at her touch to some newly-found realm,  
There to wander with her, its strange children among.

And what is the strain

We would gladly hear then?

'Tis the cheering joy! ye! and the favouring gale,  
That shoulding sing through our rigging, and tighten our sail.

And 'tis more glorious still when, with light-hearted glow,  
We in truth start to wander o'er land and o'er sea;  
When the eye of the body roams, hoping to find  
Things as fair as they seem'd to the eye of the mind.

And all may seem fair—and the eye may explore  
With gladness what ne'er met its glances before;  
But the heart aches to feel that the farther we roam,  
The more sadly will Echo repeat the word "home!"

Then hark to the strain!

Let us hear it again—

'Tis a spell that can waft us o'er land and o'er sea;

Oh! hark to the strain!

Be it pleasure or pain

That sends our hearts, Fatherland! throbbing to thee!

#### MEXICAN TRADITION.

Traditions abound in the mining districts of Mexico, as in almost every country in which the excavation of metals is a chief employment of the natives. The following is one of those legendary stories:—"In an Indian village in a northern division of the country, there lived, in the old Spanish times, a Padre, or priest, a man of simple and retired habits, who laboured to convert and maintain the inhabitants in the Catholic faith. He was beloved by the simple tribes among whom he was domiciled, and they did not fail to provide him good will by frequent presents of such trifles as they found were agreeable to him. They say that he was a great writer, and occasionally received from the Indians of his parish a small quantity of finely coloured dust, which he made use of to dry his sermons and letters. Knowing how much the Padre loved writing, they seldom returned from the mountains without bringing him some. It happened that once upon a time he had occasion to write to a friend of his, living in the capital, who was a jeweller, and did not fail to use his penmost box. In returning an answer, his knowing friend, to his great surprise, handed him with his great riches, seeing that he dried the very ink on his paper with gold-dust! This opened the simple Padre's eyes. He sent for his Indian friends, and without divulging his newly-acquired knowledge, begged them to get him more of the fine bright sand. They, nothing doubting, did so. The demon of avarice began to whisper into the old man's ear, and warm the blood of his heart. He begged for more, and received it—and then more, till they had furnished him with several

pounds weight. All entreaty that they would show him the locality where this bright dust was gathered, was resisted with calmness and steadiness for a long time. Alternate cajoling and menace were employed with equally bad success. At length, wearied out, they told him that, as they loved him, and saw he was disturbed in his mind, they would yield to his desire, and show him the spot, on the condition that he would submit to be led to and from the place himself. To this the priest consented, and was, in the course of time, taken upon their shoulders and carried whither he knew not, by many devious ways, up and down mountain and baranca, for many hours, into the recesses of the Cordilleras, and there, in a cave through which a stream issued from the breast of the mountain, they set him down and unbound him. They there showed him quantities of the gold-dust intermingled with large lumps of virgin ore, while their spokesman addressed him, saying:—"Father, we have brought you here at your urgent request, because you so much desired it, and because we loved you; take now what you want to carry away with you, let it be as much as you can carry, for here you must never hope to come again; you will never persuade us more!" The Padre seemingly acquiesced, and after disposing as much of the precious metal about his person as he could contrive to carry, he submitted to be blindfolded, and was again taken in the arms of the Indians to be transported home. The tradition goes on to relate how the good Padre, upon whom the lust of gold had now seized, thought to outwit his conductors by untying his rosary, and occasionally dropping a bead on the earth. If he flattered himself that any hope existed of his being thus able to thread the blind maze through which he passed, and find the locality, one may imagine his chagrin, when once more arrived and set down at his own door, the first sight which met his uncovered eyes was the contented face of one of his Indian guides, and an outstretched hand containing in its hollow the greater part of the grains of his rosary; while the guileless tongue of the finder expressed his simple joy at having been enabled to restore such a sacred treasure to the discomfited Padre. Entreaties and threats were now employed in vain. Gentle as the Indians were, they were not to be bended. Government was apprised of the circumstance, and commissioners were sent down to investigate the affair. The principal inhabitants were seized, and, menace being powerless, torture, that last argument of the tyrant, was resorted to—all in vain, not a word could be wrung from them! Many were put to death—still their brethren remained mute; and the village became deserted under the systematic persecution of the oppressors. The most careful researches, repeatedly made from time to time by adventurers in search of the rich deposit, have all resulted in disappointment; and, to this day, all that is known is, that somewhere in the recesses of those mountains lies the gold mine of La Navidad.—*Dumfries Times.*

#### TRANSPPOSITION OF LETTERS.

By the transposition of letters, fifty-nine words can be made from one word containing seven letters, and being two syllables, namely, Remains—the words are, main, aim, rain, man, Rome, name, mire, remain, men, rim, same, ran, sam, snear, ire, ram, is, arm, ear, an, air, rim, seam, am, mar, sea, in, me, are, mane, sir, mare, sin, raise, rise, arms, rime, amise, rare, sear, rinse, arise, earn, i, arise, ineam, manes, names, marine, miser, resin, miner, snare, sea, mine, sane, mien, manse, amen!

#### PUNCTUATION.

The following incident shows how much frequently depends on properly pointing a sentence.—In one of the large towns of England, a traveller passing a barber's shop, saw on the window "What do you think, I'll shave you for nothing and give you some drink." He immediately concluded "he's a drunken fellow, I'll go in." He did so, and sat down to be shaved. Under the operation, he inquired into the state of trade, and was answered, that it was rather flat. He then adverted to the address in the window, and inquired if he really asked upon it, and shaved for nothing, observing that he said so. "No, no," replied the barber, "people never read it right," and then read it for him, "What! I do shave you for nothing and give you some drink!" The traveller laughed heartily, paid for the operation, and commended his ingenuity.

#### A TOUGH CASE FOR THE LAWYERS.

Stevens, in his Lectures on Heads, tells the story of Bullem versus Boatman. A bull coming to the side of a river sees a boat fastened to the shore with a lay rope; the animal immediately enters the boat and forthwith cuts up the rope; the consequence is, that the boat is carried off by the stream, and the bull is drowned. A law case then arises; the proprietor of the boat pursues the proprietor of the bull for stealing the boat, and the proprietor of the bull enters an action against the proprietor of the boat for stealing his bull. This is called a tough case, but it is hardly so tough as the following, which is entered in the shape of a query in a very old Scottish law-book, called the Book of Scone:—"OH it happen that any one man be passan in the king's gait or passage, drivin befor him two schep festin and knit togither, be chance one horse, havan ane sair back, is lyan in the said gait, and ane of the schep passes on the ta side of the horse, and the tother schep be the uther side, so that the said quhairwith that are bound little his safe back, and he thairby movit, does arise, and caries the said schep with him here and there, until at last he comes and enters in ane mille havan ane fire, without ane kelp, and scatters the fire, quhairly the milln, horse, schep, and all are burnt: Query, Quha shall pay the skaith? Answer, the owner of the horse shall pay the schep, because his horse could not have been lyan in the king's high-street or common passage; and the miller shall pay for the milln and the horse, and for all other damage and skaith, because he left ane fire in the milln without ane keeper."

#### ANCIENT RECEIPT FOR MONEY.

The following old receipt for money, shows how careful our ancestors were in transacting a very simple piece of business. Reckoning the money which was paid, and the balance mentioned to be still due, the cattle must have been sold for about five shillings sterling a head:—"I, Patrick Brumfield, merchant and Burgess of Kirkwall, grant me to have received from Margaret Grindlay, relict of the late Thos. Omond, the sum of two hundred pounds money Scots, and that for 80 nine kyne bought and purchased by her fra me. Thairfor I have me well content, satisfied, and payit; and fra me, my heirs, executors, and assigns, exoner, quit, claime, and simpliciter discharge the said Margaret Grindlay, her heirs, executors, and assigns thairfor for ever. Be these presents subscribed with my hand, at Kirkwall, the day of May 1647 years, before these witnesses, Adam Brumfield, my father, and Andrew Young, not public; George Chalmers, son-in-law to the said Margaret. And of all other charges except onlie of the summe of threethretyne pounds money foresaid.—PATRICK BRUMFIELD. ADAM BRUMFIELD, witness; GEORGE CHALMERS, witness; A. YOUNG, witness."

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